

**Collaboration on the front-line:**

**To what extent do organisations work together to  
provide housing services for military veterans in  
Scotland?**

**Doctor of Philosophy**



## **DECLARATION**

I declare that none of the work contained within this thesis has been submitted for any other degree at any other university. The contents found within this thesis have been composed by the candidate Christine Robinson.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examines collaborative working in the provision of housing services, explored by focusing on military veterans as the client group. Military veterans are recognised as being over represented in the homeless population and they are one of the few employment groups who usually have to give up their homes when they give up their employment. Therefore, access to services that assist them into housing are likely to be an important resource for them.

This study adopted a case study approach and an online survey to obtain empirical evidence to explore the extent of organisations working together to provide housing services for military veterans in Scotland. The work was underpinned by theoretical frameworks in governance, networks and partnership working. Governance theory provides an understanding of how state control impacts on organisational relationships and the fragmentation of public service delivery, with the associated drivers for collaborative working to provide cohesion into the system. Studying governance focuses attention on the blurring of organisational boundaries, which both enable and restrict partnership working. It requires actors to be prepared to take risks beyond their institutional boundaries to work with others; this is a barrier for some practitioners who do not have the remit to take such risks. The findings suggest veterans experience problems at the points of interaction with generic public service providers. Also, there is a perception that this group

may have, or develop, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This perception may be over emphasised, however social housing providers are concerned about supporting this group in social housing tenancies.

Three themes emerged from the study. Firstly, coherent, rational and strategic drivers for collaborative working exist and are clear. Secondly, the obstacles to this rational objective of collaborative working include differing organisational objectives and ethos and the effects of state control on different types of organisations. Actors have to overcome these barriers to work with others, in networks, in order to provide services resulting in messy and patchy delivery. Finally, service users are left to negotiate the resulting disjointed and chaotic service provision. The thesis concludes that organisational collaborations to house military veterans are relatively new, and the extent of this activity is likely to be low throughout Scotland. Whilst collaborative working does improve housing outcomes for some military veterans, as an overall strategy it fails to deliver for all.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Civilian** Non-military person

**Discharge** The day a service person leaves the Forces

**Enlistment** The day a civilian joins the Forces

**Firm Base Initiative** The MoD's Firm base initiative operates throughout Scotland with thirteen branches divided into geographic areas, it is a vehicle to enable collaboration between differing sectors.

**Statutory homeless** - Those homeless households that have fulfilled the statutory criteria and have been accepted as duty to house giving them the entitlement to permanent accommodation (Fitzpatrick et al, 2009 p:xiii).

**Veterans** Veterans are anyone who has served for a least one day in HM Armed Forces - Navy, Army or RAF (Regular or Reserve) or Merchant Navy Seafarers and Fishermen who served in a vessel at a time when it was operated to facilitate military operation by HM Armed Forces.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>B&amp;B</b>	Bed and Breakfast
<b>CHR</b>	Common Housing Register
<b>CTP</b>	Career Transition Partnership
<b>HB</b>	Housing Benefit
<b>JUG</b>	Joined-up government
<b>LA</b>	Local Authority
<b>MoD</b>	Ministry of Defence
<b>NPM</b>	New public management
<b>SLB</b>	Street Level Bureaucrat
<b>SVR</b>	Service Veterans Residences
<b>SSAFA</b>	Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen and Families Association



<b>RAF</b>	Royal Air Force
<b>RN</b>	Royal Navy
<b>RSL</b>	Registered Social Landlord

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## CHAPTER 1

### THE DYNAMICS OF HOUSING PROVISION FOR MILITARY VETERANS

This thesis explores the involvement of central government, local government and charities in the provision of housing services for military veterans in Scotland. This is a complex area of policy and practice, with inputs from Westminster, Holyrood, the Ministry of Defence (MoD), local authorities, registered social landlords (RSLs) and charities. The study illuminates the complexity of networks in an area that is under increasing pressure because of a high degree of societal interest, political influence and lobbyist activity. Underpinning all these activities and essential to this research is the nature and extent of joint working (if any) between these different bodies and agencies.

This introductory chapter will examine contemporary issues surrounding the armed forces, including a profile of the armed forces, their relationship with the state, the definition of a veteran, the high profile of this group and the impact of the media. Consideration is then given to the provision of housing, particularly social housing, the delivery of services in Scotland and the emphasis on public and third sector organisations collaborating to provide these services. The chapter concludes by identifying the research questions and detailing the structure of the thesis.

## Background

The armed forces consist of the Army (58% of total personnel), Royal Air Force (RAF) (22%) and the Royal Navy (RN) (20%) (Defence Analytical Services, 2011).

The forces experience relatively high turnover, with approximately 17,000 or 12% of personnel leaving each year (Defence Management, 2011). On the 1 April 2013 there were 170,710 UK Regular Forces personnel, of whom 29,060 were officers and 141,650 were other ranks (Defence Analytical Services and Advice, 2013).

Army personnel overall are younger and spend less time in the armed forces compared with their RAF and RN counterparts (Defence Analytical Services and Advice, 2013).

When a person leaves the armed forces they automatically become a veteran.

There are approximately 4.8 million veterans in the UK; if dependents are included in the definition, it brings the veterans' community up to a total of ten million (Veterans UK, 2009). In Scotland, the number of veterans is estimated to be 400,000 (Scottish Government, 2012). The Ministry of Defence (MoD) designates all ex-service personnel as veterans, even if they have served for only one day (Service Personnel & Veterans Agency, 2013). This is a government definition, yet the public may consider that 'veteran' status implies that ex-forces personnel have completed military training and service, perhaps been deployed in a conflict area or completed a number of years service (Dandeker *et al*, 2006). The UK has the most inclusive definition of a veteran compared to other nations. In comparison,

in the United States a veteran is defined as someone who has served a minimum term and been honourably discharged (Dandeker *et al*, 2006: 166).

The UK's inclusive and broader definition of a veteran has the benefit of being clear and simple, and this is the definition adopted for this study. Equally, this definition provides inclusion for those most vulnerable: the recruits that have failed basic training, or those who have served for only a short time. These people are at higher risk of social exclusion, therefore the broader definition fits the policy agenda of social inclusion for all citizens (Dandeker *et al*, 2006). However, Dandeker *et al* (2006: 168) counteract this argument by stating that the broad definition "stretches resources so thinly that it leads to the 'de facto' neglect of the veteran's community as a whole".

The veteran population in general is ageing and in decline, due to the age profile of those people that were conscripted under national service. However, the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) (2010: 1) states that "the nature of the UK's extant military operations could mean that the next decade and beyond will be an important time for the armed forces welfare sector". It also identifies that an increasing number of young people will face a lifetime of physical challenges resulting from their military service.

Supporting military veterans is currently receiving a high degree of societal interest because of past and present military interventions. The raising of the profile of the armed forces has brought the Armed Forces Covenant into focus:

“The Armed Forces Covenant sets out the relationship between the nation, the state and the armed forces. It recognises that the whole nation has a moral obligation to members of the armed forces and their families and it establishes how they should expect to be treated” (MoD, 2013).

The new Armed Forces Act 2011 ensures for the first time that the Military Covenant is recognised in law. It creates a requirement for annual reporting to Parliament of the Armed Forces Covenant on how the Government is supporting the armed forces, their families and veterans in key areas such as healthcare, housing and education (UK Government, 2011). The principle of the covenant is that it redresses disadvantages that the armed forces community face because of their service; for example, schools can now exceed their maximum class size if it is to accommodate a service child (MoD, 2013a). At the same time, the armed forces community covenant was established, which is a voluntary pledge of mutual support between the local armed forces and the civilian community (MoD, 2013b).

An example of the high profile interest in the armed forces was the media and public focus on the small Wiltshire town of Wootton Bassett, where people gathered for the repatriation of British military personnel who had died in Afghanistan. Wootton Bassett is on the route from RAF Lyneham (where the bodies of dead service personnel were repatriated to the UK) to the Coroner’s office in Oxford, where the post mortems were performed. “The coffins of 355 fallen military personnel passed through Wootton Bassett between spring 2007 and summer 2011” (BBC, 2012). Since then, RAF Lyneham has closed and a new

repatriation centre was opened at RAF Brize Norton. Wootton Bassett is no longer on the route and the corteges now pass through the village of Carterton (Guardian, 2011). The Wootton Bassett 'phenomenon' at the time was described as the most important national ritual occurring in the UK (Freeden, 2011: 1). "The Wootton Bassett ceremonies elicit support for the bereaved, for the honour of the army, for the traditions of respect and steadfastness associated with British public culture, and for the dignity of the nation" (Freeden, 2011: 8). The debate over the justification of the Afghanistan war was frozen out of the Wootton Bassett phenomenon by promoting the ideals of "pride, public respect and patriotic unity", patriotism is "employed to trump dissent" (Freeden, 2011: 8). What Freeden is saying is that this apparent non-political ceremony covertly unifies a nation in patriotism, but at the same time provides a screen against the political decision of bringing the UK's armed forces into highly unpopular wars.

The media focus on the armed forces' commitment to the state, whereupon armed forces employees commit to a 'contract of unlimited liability' that can obligate them to risk and even lose their lives for the state (Dandeker *et al*, 2006; Mileham, 2010). The media question state commitment through stories about lack of equipment for forces personnel on the front line or 'heroes' being placed at the bottom of council housing waiting lists. Tipping (2008: 13) discusses how such articles "illustrating a lack of proper concern for 'our boys' can be used as a stick to beat the establishment".

Typical housing stories reported in the media include: "The plight of homeless ex-servicemen refused beds taken by immigrants. Please read this carefully - or not

at all”, with a picture of a homeless ex- serviceman (see Figure 1.0 below). The Scotsman, (2011) reported that a soldier and his family feared returning to the UK would mean homelessness. The irony is that the soldier had been awarded the Freedom of Aberdeen City, but the Council did not have a council house available for him and advised him to contact the homeless team. The Aberdeen Evening Express (2012) reported “Homeless soldier says ‘I was better off in Afghanistan than Aberdeen’ Gunner living in crowded house”. The story goes on to explain how the soldier, having being honourably discharged from the armed forces, was told by Aberdeen City Council that he and his family will have a long wait for somewhere to stay. Many such stories can be found by performing a simple internet search.

**Figure 1.0: Picture of a Homeless Military Veteran**



[Source: Daily Mail 2012]

The armed forces are one of the few employment groups where when an individual gives up their employment they usually lose their housing, and this is compounded by the loss of their social networks. Whilst most armed forces personnel make a smooth transition into civilian life, some encounter problems that are often complex and manifold.

“A small but significant number of veterans leaving the armed forces continue to have difficulty in adjusting to civilian life. Some may have suffered horrific injuries, some may struggle silently with psychological issues and, for others, the loss of the security of the armed forces means dealing with everyday issues, such as finances, finding a job or housing, becomes completely overwhelming and isolating” (Poppy Scotland, 2012).

One of the most significant barriers for military veterans, in the transition to civilian life and later, is accessing housing (Johnsen *et al*, 2008; Poppy Scotland, 2009; Mark Wright Foundation, 2011; Poppy Scotland, 2012). A study of UK cities found that ex-service personnel were over-represented in the population of people suffering ‘multiple exclusion homelessness’ (Johnsen & Fitzpatrick, 2012: 2). They describe ‘multiple exclusion homelessness’ as “a form of ‘deep’ exclusion involving not just homelessness but also substance misuse, institutional care (e.g. prison) and/or involvement in ‘street culture’ activities (e.g. begging)”. Whilst the exact number of homeless veterans is unknown, it is recognised that they are over represented in the homeless population (Crisis, 2013; Johnsen & Fitzpatrick, 2012; Johnsen *et al*, 2008; Poppy Scotland, 2009).

Housing services for military veterans in Scotland are provided by both public and third sector organisations, and this thesis seeks to explore how these organisations coordinate these activities. It is likely that some veterans are housed in the private rented sector. This research has not included the private sector, given that there are no private rental organisations that exclusively house veterans in Scotland.

To understand current housing provision we have to consider the past; the next part of the chapter will briefly consider a historical perspective. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century under neoliberal regimes most people were housed in private rented accommodation. This unregulated market failed to provide housing outcomes that were deemed socially acceptable (Doling, 1997: 13). By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>



century, and at the end of the First World War, the ‘homes fit for heroes’ campaign saw the building of half a million homes. To house ‘heroes’ who had won the war, and for housing provision, this was significant because for the first time the local authority became a major supplier of housing (Swenarton, 1981: 1).

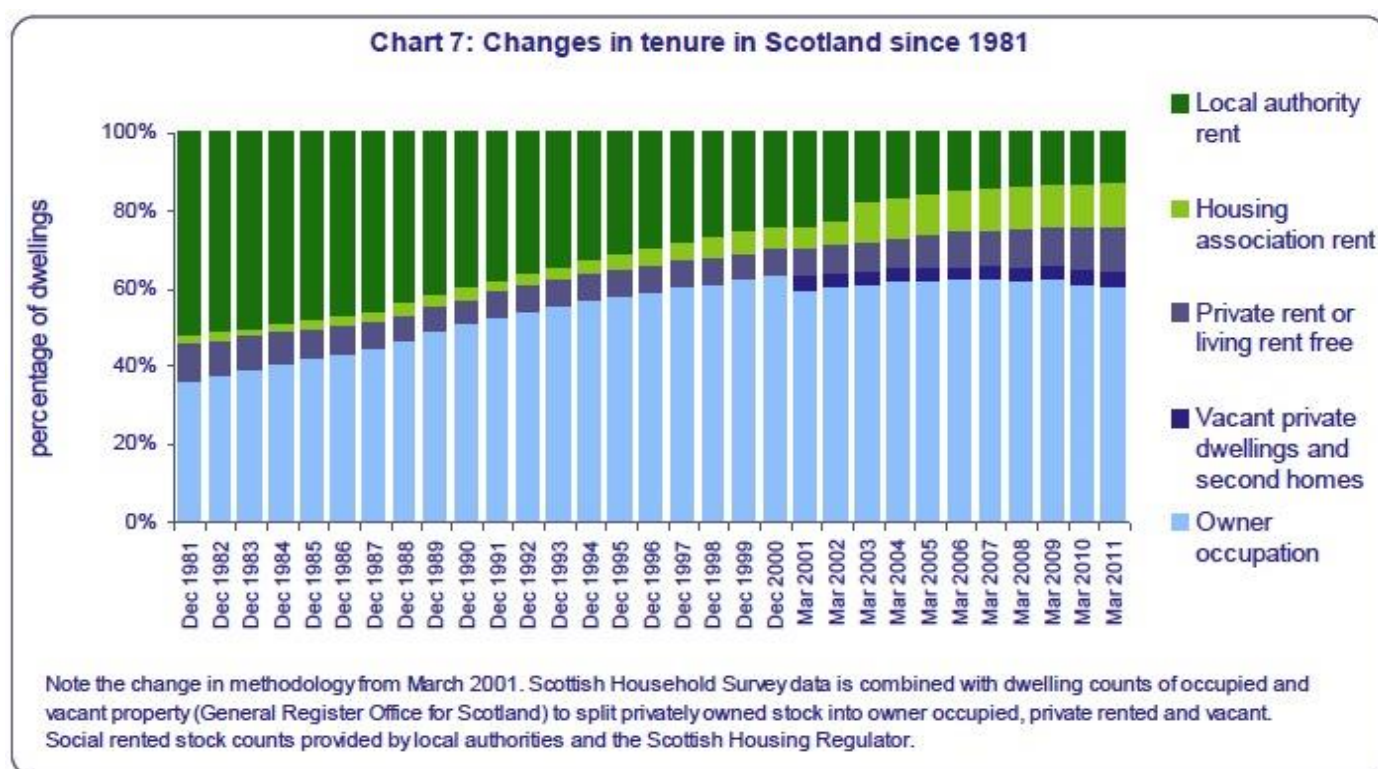
By the end of the Second World War the lack of housing became a major political issue, with many properties being destroyed, reformation of families and an increase in the birth rate post-war (Lund, 2011: 53). In 1945 the government increased the flat rate subsidy to local authorities for building ‘general needs housing’, tripling the late 1930s’ rate. Local authorities could also borrow below market interest rates and planning legislation promoted local authority house building, resulting in local authorities building 80% of all new housing between 1945 and 1951 (Lund, 2011: 54). This increase in local authority house building continued into the 1960s, but by the 1970s there was a shift towards laissez-faire economics and housing policy moved towards free market principles and the promotion of home ownership, as demonstrated in Figure 1.1 (Lund, 2011: 62). The restructuring of the welfare state (attributed to the well-established debate on neoliberal politics) over the last thirty years has meant a significant reduction in the provision and access to social housing in the United Kingdom.

Access to affordable housing in the United Kingdom is currently one of the most significant issues facing society; one of the reasons for this is the lack of social housing. For those leaving the armed forces, access to social housing is likely to be an important issue for them. Whilst housing is an expensive and immovable

resource, the tenure of housing has changed significantly in the last thirty years. In Scotland, at the beginning of the 1980s, approximately 55% of the population were housed in social housing, compared to less than 30% by 2011 (Scottish Government, 2012a). This is attributed to the 'right to buy' council housing policy and the general increase in homeownership (Lund, 2011). The economic crisis of 2007 has recently restricted access to mortgages, reducing this pathway to home ownership, which has resulted in a marked increase in private sector renting (Scottish Government, 2014a).

The reduction in social housing in Scotland is illustrated in Figure 1.1. Equally significant is the shift from social housing, being delivered largely by public sector entities, to a significant increase in RSLs providing housing. This fits with the discussion described as the shift from 'government to governance' and the associated increase in organisations out with government providing housing services. This fragmentation of housing services, in theory, is a driver towards organisational collaboration.

Figure 1.1: Housing trends in Scotland since 1981



[Source: Scottish Government (2012a)]

The Scottish Government's (2007) *'Firm Foundations'* paper on the future of Scottish housing announced the intention of building 35,000 houses per year by 2012, across all tenures. However post 'credit-crunch' in February 2010, Homes for Scotland (the house building representation body), stated that the housing sector was in its worst crisis since the Second World War and housing supply was at an all time low. The Herald (2013) reported that "fewer homes are being built than in the depths of the great depression". The article goes on to predict that by 2014 the number of under 35s in the private rented sector will overtake those that have a mortgage, and by 2020 it estimates that 50% of young people will be housed in the private rented sector.

The provision of housing is resource intensive, in comparison to other areas of welfare provision, and housing is a static resource. Lowe (2011: 2) discusses how housing does not easily fit as one of the 'pillars of the welfare state' as education, social security and the health services do. He explains that the reason for is that housing, much more than education or health services, is provided through the private sector.

Crucially "some people think of housing as only about the state sector - the idea of it as a social right that the state should enforce like compulsory education. Others think of housing more as a private commodity that is bought and sold in a market and that the function of the state, if there is one, is to regulate transactions and the financial industry that supports home purchases" (Lowe 2011: 3).

Lowe argues that this has dogged the subject for some time; the confusion between housing as a social right or as a commodity, and states that "in fact it is both", they are not mutually exclusive (Clapham *et al*, 1990, cited in Lowe, 2011: 4). Housing as the 'wobbly pillar of the welfare state' (Torgersen, 1987) therefore provides an interesting study of the issues of contemporary welfare provision, governance and partnership working.

This thesis focuses on housing provision in Scotland, particularly social housing. Under Scotland's devolution settlement, housing became a devolved power to Holyrood, whilst defence and welfare benefits remained Westminster's responsibility. Governance theory increases our understanding of the provision of

welfare services. As an analytical concept, it guides the study of power, authority, institutional boundaries and the patterns of organisational relationships (Newman, 2001: 12). It offers an explanation for the fragmentation of public service delivery, and in this thesis it is used to illuminate the issues surrounding housing military veterans and how organisations collaborate. The provision of housing services replicates the move from government to governance, with the services delivered by a network of organisations from both the public and third sectors. Governance theory is used to conceptualise the shift to the delivery of public services by a mixture of organisations from the public, private and third sectors.

This study focuses on how public and third sector organisations work together to provide housing for military veterans in Scotland. There are clear drivers to promote partnerships between sectors. Two of the main principles informing the Christie Commission report into the provision of public services emphasise the need for improved joint working between the public, private and third sectors and reducing duplication (Scottish Government, 2011b). Within the UK, the provision of open public sectors promotes the delivery of public services, with an emphasis on open networks and a diverse set of providers to provide the most efficient services to the public (Cabinet Office, 2012: 3).

Collaboration between the public, private and third sectors in the provision of public services is not new. Indeed, commentators argue that the current emphasis on partnership working between organisations providing public services is promoted to ameliorate the fragmentation of service delivery, and to ‘suture’ the

services back together (Dickinson & Glasby, 2010; Davies, 2009; Fenwick, Miller & McTavish, 2012).

Involving charities in the provision of public services is seen as a way to make public services less bureaucratic and more client-centred (Carmel & Harlock, 2008). However, even within one sector, the military charities sector, it is difficult to achieve collaboration. The Telegraph (2011) reported that military charities have been urged to work together, highlighting that the number of military charities founded has tripled every year in the UK since 2005. The article also discussed that there has been a substantial increase in public donations to military charities, at an economically challenging time for charities; this illustrates the increase in empathy and understanding for this group.

One of these charities established by a military family is Help for Heroes. It is described as a ‘£100 million fundraising phenomenon’ and has raised funds to support military veterans of wars post 9/11 (Help for Heroes, 2011; The Guardian, 2011). The rise in forces charities is not unproblematic, with veterans being confused by the array of support; equally, it may not provide the best use of resources, with some charities provision overlapping (Glasgow Herald, 2011). As Professor Hew Strachan argues, resettlement and veterans’ support are pressing issues but significantly, “they are ones that need, not so much more money, but better organisation” (Glasgow Herald, 2011).

An occasional paper by the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) (2010: 11) describes the difficulty caused by the fragmentation of signposting mechanisms for the armed forces and veterans. They identified the need for rationalisation of the third sector because of the current duplication of administration and governance, which leads to “financial wastage diluted influence and missed opportunities”. “Greater coordination would improve the lobbying influence of the armed forces third sector” (RUSI, 2010: 11). However, they recognise that there would be resistance from the sector to rationalisation.

This thesis provides an in-depth study of the contemporary issues surrounding housing provision, the complexity of governance, networks and organisational collaboration in practice, using veterans as an illustration. This study adds to the broader literature on governance by providing an understanding of how organisations ‘grapple’ in an area of policy/practice that is in the spotlight and in flux. The thesis will illuminate some of the complexity of organisational relationships, and how the state impacts on this activity. It highlights that at a policy/higher management level the benefit of organisational collaboration to deliver services is clear, for those working to supply the service it is messy and less clear, and for consumers it is unclear and difficult for them to negotiate and access fragmented services. It will fill a gap in the literature as there is a paucity on collaboration in housing and how this impacts on housing military veterans. It does this by answering the following research.

## Research questions

The theoretical framework that guides and facilitates this research is Stoker's (1998: 18) 'governance as theory: five propositions'. Also important is network theory to describe the links between organisations (Arganoff, 2007; Hudson & Lowe, 2009; Kickert & Koppenjan, 1997; Rhodes, 1992; Stoker, 1998). At the micro level Hudson & Hardy's (2002) 'five categories of barriers to coordination' and Sullivan & Williams' (2010) and Williams' (2012) work on boundary spanners, focus on the actors involved in collaborative working. This provided an explanatory framework to guide the research questions and data analysis.

A case study approach of four different types of organisations that provide housing services for military veterans, and an online survey of military veterans, is adopted to obtain data to answer the research questions. This will be discussed in greater detail in the methodology chapter within the thesis. The specific research questions are:

How do the case study organisations 'fit' a governance perspective?

What is the nature of organisational collaboration at the case study organisations to meet the housing needs of military veterans, in Scotland?

How do the case study organisations operate in the area of policy and practice to house military veterans in Scotland?



## **Outline of chapters**

This introductory chapter is followed by the literature review, which is provided in Chapters Two through to Four. These three distinct chapters cover governance, collaboration and military veterans and housing. The three chapters discuss and synthesise the literature, conclude with an analysis of the issues and the research questions are identified from the gaps highlighted in this literature review.

Chapter Five presents the research methodology, detailing the specific theoretical framework applied by the study. It discusses the reasons for selecting case studies, the qualitative methods employed and the online survey that generated quantitative data. Ethical considerations are discussed, along with the methods used to analyse the data. Chapters Six through to eight mirror the literature review chapters, reporting on the findings from the data collection for the thesis and answering the research questions.

Chapter Nine brings together the findings and the literature review chapters by discussing key themes and exploring governance, organisational collaboration and the provision of housing services for military veterans. It then concludes the thesis by discussing how collaborative working to meet the housing needs of veterans is in its infancy and these collaborations may only be in some areas of Scotland.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE COMPLEXITY AND CONTRADICTIONS OF GOVERNANCE

#### Introduction

To examine how organisations work together to provide housing services for military veterans, this study employs Stoker's (1998) five propositions of governance framework:

1. "Governance refers to a set of institutions and actors that are drawn from but also beyond government" (Stoker, 1998: 18).
  2. "Governance identifies the blurring of boundaries and responsibilities for tackling social and economic issues" (Stoker, 1998: 21).
  3. "Governance identifies the power dependence involved in the relationships between institutions involved in collective action" (Stoker, 1998: 22).
  4. "Governance is about autonomous self-governing networks or actors" (Stoker, 1998: 23).
  5. "Governance recognises the capacity to get things done which does not rest on the power of government to command or use its authority" (Stoker, 1998: 24).
- Stoker (1998) discusses how the value of such a framework is as an organising tool to provide an understanding of the changes in governing. It offers a simplified lens

on complex reality: “this is not to simplify the complexity but to help to find a path or direction” (Stoker, 1998: 26). Kjær (2011: 106) discusses that the virtue of using a governance framework is that “it explores the changing boundaries between state and society, and it forces us to explore state authority as an empirical question rather than take it as a given”. Using governance as an analytical concept guides the study of power, authority, institutional boundaries and the associated patterns of organisational relationships (Newman, 2001: 12). Governance embraces the ideas of collaboration and networks. These networks consist of a wide range of state and non-state actors that deliver public services, and according to Lowe (2004: 35) “networks are the engine room of the modern British polity”.

A governance perspective is used in this study to illuminate organisational behaviour, the changes of institutional boundaries and collaboration between state and non-state actors, who provide housing services for military veterans. There are various governance frameworks which analyse governance, but they appear to be based on similar principles to Stoker’s framework. These include Newman’s (2001: 162) ten principles of the governance shift framework that adds a policy dimension to a governance framework. Or Fenwick, Miller & McTavish’s (2012: 407) adaptation of Rhodes’ (2000) four theses of governance, briefly described as: (1) The involvement of state and non-state actors (2) Organisational interdependence (3) Game-like interactions (4) Networks having significant degree of autonomy from the state.

Stoker's (1998) theoretical framework is applied to the research data, analysed and discussed further in Chapter Six. This chapter's aim is to review the literature on governance. It considers the definition of governance and how the shift from government to governance brings the power of the state and the debate about its ability to 'row or steer' into focus. Rowing describes the government's direct control and delivery of public services, whilst steering is synonymous with governance; it is about government being strategic, influencing through collaboration with other partners from the third and private sectors in the delivery of public services. It examines issues of autonomy and accountability in the complex web of vertical and horizontal interactions in collaborations with organisations from both the public and third sectors. It discusses the reform of the welfare state with its emphasis on new public management (NPM) over the last thirty years. The general discussion of governance in this study is necessary to provide an understanding of how power, autonomy and accountability impacts on the provision of public services, and in this specific case, that of housing.

### **The definition of governance**

Governance is used to describe a number of different concepts. For example, the term good governance has been adopted by banks to describe ethical lending, while corporate governance is used to describe the control and the direction of corporations. The Scottish Housing Regulator (2013a) (referring to RSLs) identifies that good governance is essential for any type of organisation. In this example, it is being employed to describe a management decision-making procedure. Newman (2001) describes the usage of the word governance as promiscuous acknowledging

however that it is helpful to describe the complexity of social and institutional change and to understand the policy process. For this thesis, governance is used to provide an understanding of the delivery of public welfare services, with a shift in delivery from government bureaucracy and hierarchical systems to networks (Bevir & Rhodes, 2003: 196). This shift in delivery is set within the timeframe of the last thirty years.

Newman (2004: 71) defines governance as:

“Governance theory starts from the proposition that we are witnessing a shift from government (through direct control to governance through steering, influencing and collaboration with multiple actors in a dispersed system). The predominant focus is on the increasing significance of governance through networks as an alternative to markets and hierarchy. The state, it is argued, can no longer assume a monopoly of expertise or resources necessary to govern, and must look to a plurality of interdependent institutions drawn from the public, private and voluntary sectors.”

Bochel & Duncan (2007: 70) state that governance “refers to the activities and processes of government and reflects the fragmentation and complexity of the modern state”. Newman (2001: 13) described how traditional bureaucratic service provision was partly dismantled during the neo-liberal economic regimes of the 1980s and 1990s, with a shift in welfare services delivery from the state to mixed provision involving the private and third sectors (Clarke *et al*, 2000: 2). These

mixes are seen as “answers to changes in societal dynamics and ever growing societal diversity and complexity” (Kooiman & Jentoft, 2009: 820). This shift in the delivery of public services has led to a fragmented system of delivery. In response to such fragmentation, commentators argue that collaboration between organisations is promoted to ameliorate against the fragmentation of service delivery (Dickinson & Glasby, 2010; Davies, 2009; Fenwick, Miller & McTavish, 2012).

Colebatch (2009: 63) reminds us that “elements of the governance narrative - actors from inside and outside government, the blurring of roles and responsibilities, interdependence, and the relative unimportance of command” had already been identified before it was termed governance. What defining governance meant was that it was seen as a change in practice, with the emergence from government and governing to the inter-linkage between organisations and networks. Stoker (1998: 17) explains that the outputs of governance are not different to government; it is just about a difference in the process of delivering social policy.

Some question the governance narrative; Grix & Philpots (2011: 15) in their study of the sports policy sector, concluded that sports policy did not fit the “ideal-typical conceptualisation of a shift from ‘big’, interfering government to a more diverse and democratic governance through networks and partnerships”. Indeed, they found that there was little autonomy from the state in this sector. They concluded, “government sport policy is directed from the top”, with little input

from other stakeholders. They brought into question the governance narrative, particularly in policy areas where they suggest do not seem to fit; these include education, sport and social housing (Grix & Philpots, 2011: 15). Equally, Kjær (2011: 104) points out that if one definition from a governance framework is not empirically observed, for example autonomy from the state, then it could not be analysed with the given phenomenon as governance. Perhaps these views fail to fully consider that government still exists alongside governance. Importantly, and as Hudson *et al* (2007: 57) highlight, there is a lack of clarity about autonomy of networks:

“It is unclear when networks are likely to be autonomous and in what ways, not least because ‘autonomy’ from the state implies that state actors are external to networks, yet even today’s ‘hollowed out’ state usually plays a central role in policy delivery, with local authorities or government departments often being the key organisations within policy delivery networks.”

### **State and devolved powers**

Governance theory suggests that state power has become de-centred (Newman, 2004). Rhodes argued that the state had been hollowed out and that governance implies that “the power is as much outside as inside Westminster and has been dispersed to new assemblies, new agencies, supranational organisations such as the EU and into private and ‘quasi-private’ sectors” (Rhodes, 1997: 17). He argues that “gone is the unitary, centralised state managed by Whitehall, in has come a

much more fragmented and ‘networked’ system of governance” (Rhodes, 1997: 17).

This concept of the ‘hollowing out’ of the state is contested, with commentators (Lowe, 2004; Fenwick, Miller & McTavish, 2012) arguing that government power has not declined, rather it has adopted different methods of control. Hudson & Lowe (2004: 95) argued that during the Blair Government “not only was the central apparatus of government still strong, but that it had increased in size”. Equally, Marsh, Richards & Smith (2003: 332) emphasise that the state has been reconstituted “rather than hollowed-out”. Peters & Pierre (2006: 211) state that the change is not from “government to governance but the role of government in governance”. Whilst governance has been described as being wider than government, Robichau (2011: 114) counters this by quoting Bevir’s (2010: 255) argument “that this logic does not give theoretical license to reduce government to a mere ‘hollow shell’”.

Newman (2001: 13) describes how globalisation, devolution and “the growth of supranational bodies challenge the capacity of nation states to control their environment”, giving the EU as an example of a network organisation that is not a state, but influences other states through guidance and legislation. The challenge for the state is to identify strategies to meet their objectives. Newman (2001: 13) argues that does not imply a decline in the role of the state, but rather she sees it as an “adaptation to its environment rather than a dimension of its power”.



Rhodes (2007: 1255), in defending his theory of the 'hollow state', argues that "the centre has rubber levers" emphasising that applying levers at the top does necessarily mean they are applied at the bottom. He goes on to say that those that subscribe to the strong executive model fail to deal with the questions such as "Why does the strong centre fail?" and "Why is coordination so elusive?" He states that he never argued that "the state was disabled or that it had broken up", rather he presented a corrective to the Westminster model" (Rhodes, 2007: 1255), with the Westminster model used to describe traditional top down government in the UK.

Peters & Pierre (2006: 215) state "the most important thing about state institutions for the governance process is that they provide an agreed-upon mechanism for establishing priorities, and for making choices among competing priorities". Legislation provides the method for the established priorities to be placed in law. Peters & Pierre (2006: 216) imply that whilst governance has seen the implantation of these laws by non-governmental actors, these activities are enacted in the 'shadow of hierarchy'. The state, through governance, now selects what to resource and what to support. It now makes strategic choices and is less involved because it is no longer devoted to the "minor details of policy; rather it shapes the direction of policy" (Peters & Pierre, 2006: 214; Hill & Hupe, 2009: 113). Davies (2011: 19) sees meta-governance as being about the state working strategically. Peters & Pierre (2006: 214) discuss how governance may have enhanced the state because "clearing some of the baggage of the hierarchical state may produce even more capacity to govern". Jackson (2009, cited in

Robichau, 2011: 119) debates the possibility that the future of government will be as brokers between the public and private sectors.

The UK coalition government's agenda is for the provision of more open public services:

“This means replacing top-down monopolies with open networks in which diverse and innovative providers compete to provide the best and most efficient services for the public. It means re-thinking the role of government - so that governments at all levels become increasingly funders, regulators and commissioners, whose task it is to secure quality and guarantee fair access for all, instead of attempting to run the public services from a desk in Whitehall, city hall or county hall”

(Cabinet Office, 2012: 3).

This approach was evident in Scotland in 2007, when both national and local government signed a concordat. This was a new partnership between the Scottish Government and local government, with the Scottish Government setting the direction of policy and outcomes, which local government were then expected to achieve based on national outcomes. “The Scottish Government's intention is to stand back from micro-managing, thus reducing bureaucracy and freeing up local authorities and their partners to get on with the job” (Scottish Government, 2011). The Scottish Government predicted that the single outcome agreements would reduce ring fencing of funding, bureaucracy and reporting requirements (Scottish Government, 2011).

It is simplistic to think that the power of the state has become diffused, as Marsh, Richards & Smith (2003: 315) suggest, the key players in policy making are still within the core executive. Equally Klijn & Kippenjan (2000: 151) argue that government agents have a special position within networks and this is based on their resources and objectives. Moore & Hartley (2008: 6) discuss the implications of hierarchical direct control through state authority, and how this control is exercised by sometimes being conducted coercively through resources and the state's claim to a democratic mandate. They argue that the public, private and voluntary sector aspects of governance "mean that influence becomes a significant strategy as well as (and sometimes instead of) formal hierarchical authority". Although the movement from government to governance appears seamless, Newman recognised that the barriers to this shift are the resistance to the redistribution of power.

"The process of realigning and dispersing state power interacted with rather than displaced, a process of centralisation and the exercise of more coercive and direct forms of control" (Newman, 2001: 163).

The study of governance in a UK context would not be complete without a brief discussion of devolved powers. Scotland's devolution settlement of 1998 ensured that housing became a devolved function in Holyrood, whilst other areas such as defence and welfare benefits remained a Westminster responsibility. This is not to say that Scotland did not have its own housing policies prior to this date, but what devolution did was to speed up policy change and produce housing policy that

diverged from the rest of the UK (Sim, 2004). For example, Scotland's homelessness policies have been described as the most progressive homeless legislation in Europe, in that the safety net, which aimed to virtually end homelessness in Scotland by 2012, has been widened (Anderson, 2009). In contrast, Murie (2004) warned against overstating the divergence of policy after devolution, as housing systems in the UK are all affected by the same financial and taxation systems. Nevertheless, Birrell (2009: 15) states that in the wider social policy arena, the Scottish Parliament "has enacted a considerable volume of legislation, greater than the number of Scottish Acts Westminster might have been expected to pass in the absence of devolution". Although Rummery & Greener (2012: 141) suggest that whilst devolution has opened up new policy space and opportunity, "tangible differential outcomes experienced by English, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish citizens may be more difficult to find". Therefore it seems open to debate about the level of influence caused by devolution. There are a lot of things at play here. To use housing as an example, on the one hand, there has been a divergence in housing policy in Scotland from the rest of the UK; however Westminster still controls benefits and this has the potential to limit housing policy outcomes in Scotland. Scotland's aim to end homelessness is a useful example, as it may be thwarted by cuts to benefits.

Now it is necessary to consider how governance in practice affects democracy, autonomy and accountability. Klijn (2008: 511) claims, "governance is the process that takes place within governance networks". Papadopoulos (2007: 483) suggests that network forms of governance "entail a number of accountability problems.

‘Shared responsibility’ and lack of visibility are aggravated by the frequent ‘multilevel’ aspect of these forms of governance”. Although the picture is not entirely clear, Papadopoulos sees this type of governance as weakening democratic accountability, but equally he highlights that it does provide ‘multiplication of control methods’, albeit these accountabilities “are dispersed and do not form a coherent accountability system” (Papadopoulos, 2007: 484). Papadopoulos (2007: 479) uses the EU as an example, explaining that mechanisms that operate across intergovernmentalist logic mean that ‘many hands’ dilute responsibility and the length of responsibility chain makes accountability, visible only to those close to the network.

Davies (2011: 64) suggests that “collaboration can actually reduce the democratic legitimacy of public decisions ‘by fostering a technocratic and secluded style of decision making, which operates according to tacit and informal rules unfamiliar to outsiders’”. Rummery (2006: 296) highlights that partnerships can mitigate against ‘democratic renewal’ as they may preclude public participation. Klijn & Skelcher (2007: 598) emphasise that “powerful governmental actors increase their capacity to shape and deliver public policy in a complex world through the instrumental use of networks”. Indeed Skelcher & Sullivan (2008: 756) see collaborations as being more likely to be informed by stakeholder democracy representing sectoral interests, rather than representative democracy.

Stoker (1998: 23) argues that whilst self-governing regimes “are seen as more effective than government-imposed regulation”, the dilemma it creates is one of

accountability. Billis (2010: 3) discusses the rise of hybrid organisations and describes “them as organisations that possess ‘significant’ characteristics of more than one sector (public, private and third)”. He uses partially nationalised banks in the USA, such as Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, as examples and discusses the notoriety of these organisations and how they have been blamed for the global financial collapse. Indeed, these organisations have been labelled by some as the ‘the abominable hybrid’. He discusses the disquiet felt by many, that these types of organisation do not have “explicit clarity of accountability either to the state or the market” (Billis, 2010:12). This study does not include private sector housing organisations. Whilst housing is mainly a ‘private sector good’, this thesis focuses on social housing, and through funding regimes, social housing can largely be considered a ‘public good’.

In contrast, regulation has been seen to strengthen accountability to the state. Newman (2001) argued that Labour’s attempts to promote a network of governance had been hampered by its own centralised control of target setting, audit and inspections. Hill (2005: 274) states that “accountability is complex because tasks are complex just as much as because governance is complex”. A growing number of commentators expressed their concern about the increase in regulation and this relates back to the debate on the ‘hollowing out of the state’. While the 2007 financial crisis has been attributed to the de-regulation of the banks, perhaps this highlights the difference between the public and the private sector regulation and autonomy from the state.

In Scotland, the emphasis of over-regulation in the public sector was reported in The Scotsman newspaper (2006: 42); it highlighted that the Scottish Executive did not know how many regulators it had created. In an exercise undertaken by Highland Council, they found that in 2004-2005 “there were 482 separate inspections in their area, taking up an estimated fifth of the total working time of their senior managers”.

In response to these types of concerns, the Crerar Review (2007) was commissioned to report on the independent review of the regulation, audit, inspection and complaints handling of public services in Scotland. The review concluded that independent scrutiny provides an assurance of standards and value for public money. However, it found that the myriad of regulators operating in Scotland was overly complex and needed simplifying (CIH, 2007; Scottish Government, 2007a). This is clearly relevant to social housing. A consultation by the Scottish Government (2009) took place prior to the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010. It identified that routine regulation carried out by the Scottish Housing Regulator was too much of a burden on organisations that were performing well, and that the role of the regulator should be less about routine regulation and more about targeting housing organisations that were not performing well.

As a requirement of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010, the Scottish Social Housing Charter “set the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities”. It came into effect on the 1 April 2012 and replaced performance standards issued under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (Scottish Government, 2012c: 5). The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 “included powers to modernise the regulation of social housing” and created an independent Scottish Housing Regulator. The role of the Scottish Housing Regulators is “to protect the interests of tenants, homeless people and others who use social landlords’ services” (Scottish Housing Regulator, 2013).

The increase in regulation, performance management and auditing occurred during the period of New Public Management (NPM). To put this period into context, NPM was introduced in the 1980s, coinciding with the reconstruction of the welfare state, with a shift in the delivery of public services, as discussed earlier in the chapter.



Clarke *et al* (2000: 6) describe the features of NPM as follows:

“Attention to outputs and performance rather than inputs;

Organisations being viewed as chains of low-trust relationships linked by contracts or contractual type processes;

The separation of purchaser and provider or client and contractor roles within formerly integrated processes or organisations;

Breaking down large scale organizations and using competition to enable ‘exit’ or ‘choice’ by service users;

Decentralization of budgetary and personal authority to line managers” (Clarke *et al*, 2000: 6).

Whilst Clarke *et al* (2000: 7) state that this description is helpful (to illustrate the differences between older bureaucratic public sector administration and NPM), it has its limitations and these are related to it providing an overly singular view, an over simplification of organisations. Concern is also expressed that NPM tends to focus on ‘management’ in an occupational sense “in ways that miss more complex social, political and organisational change” (Clarke *et al*, 2000:7).

In the context of housing, Mullins & Murie (2006: 130) state that “ideas on the reform of public services embedded in ‘new public management’, ‘managerialism’ and ‘modernization’ have had a strong influence on the ways in which housing policy has been shaped and delivered over the last 30 years”. New public management focussed on consumer empowerment, transforming the public services to emulate the private sector, in order to tighten financial control, provide stronger management and increase auditing. This is coupled with the decentralisation of housing provision, with social housing traditionally provided by local authorities being increasingly provided by RSLs (Mullins & Murie, 2006).

Bevir & Rhodes (2003: 46) see NPM as relevant to the discussion on governance because “steering is central to the analysis of public management and a synonym for governance”. They go on to discuss how steering is about policy decisions whilst rowing is about service delivery and argue that NPM is about less government (less rowing) but more governance (steering). Alternatively, Klijn (2008: 509) suggests that NPM is about improving existing bureaucracy of public organisations, whilst governance is about relationships between government and non-governmental actors.

Hoggett (2006: 176) argues “it has become fashionable to think of bureaucracy as an outmoded, inflexible, inefficient and unresponsive form of organisation rather than the unique and necessary form that public organisations must assume given their complexity”. He highlights the complexity of governance in pluralist societies with public organisations at the ‘intersection of conflicting needs’ and in

the governance of society, conflicts are inherent and irresolvable (Hoggett, 2006: 176). He goes on to discuss that whilst politicians emphasise different values, those that they suppress usually “return to haunt the political system, typically returning at the level at which policy is implemented” (Hoggett, 2006: 179). He cites Lipsky’s (1980) work on street level bureaucrats (SLBs) to argue that “a typical mechanism for legislative conflict resolution is to pass on intractable conflicts for resolution (or continued irresolution) to the administrative level” (Hoggett, 2006: 179). He concludes by highlighting that public organisations have “multiple tasks which are often in contradiction” and beset with conflict (Hoggett 2006: 192).

Osborne (2007) states that NPM was just a short interlude between public administration (post 1945) and new public governance (NPG). Osborne (2007: 384) describes how NPM posits “both a *plural* state, where multiple inter-dependent actors contribute to the delivery of public services and a *pluralist* state, where multiple processes inform the policy making system. As a consequence of these two forms of plurality, its focus is very much upon inter-organisational relationships and the governance of processes and it stresses service effectiveness and outcomes”.

Rhodes (2011) discusses the changes in network governance in three distinct waves. The first wave took place in the 1980s with state power being dispersed. The second wave was a shift from bureaucracy to markets and networks, focussing on meta-governance. Rhodes (2011: 564) sees this as a shift in the role of the

state from direct governance to meta-governance describing this as a shift “from command and control of bureaucracy to the indirect steering of relatively autonomous stakeholders”. The third wave brings the state back through meta-governance and meta-regulation. It is important to state that commentators do not claim that these changes were absolute; aspects of former regimes remain. Kjær (2011: 111) highlights “that we do not know enough about the tensions and dilemmas that arise when new and old forms of governance co-exist and interact”.

Carmel & Harlock (2008: 158) discuss this change in terms of the governance of the voluntary sector, stating, “partnership can be directly contrasted with the competitive contracting policy that dominated UK-voluntary sector relations up to the late 1990s”. What it highlights is that the debate over the ‘hollowing out of the state’ straddled these two different periods of administration.

Hill & Hupe (2009: 81) recognise three different epochs, referring to them as the age of intervention (1930s-1980s), the age of the market and corporate government (1980s-1990s) and the age of focussed action from the centre: the 2000s. They go on to argue that the state now may actually be more hierarchical than it ever was during the intervention period; they suggest that this most recent shift was due to the events of 9/11 and is related to national security (Hill & Hupe, 2009: 94). This is a big claim to make, but 9/11 was a defining moment, particularly for the US Government, therefore it is not incredulous that government after this event would want to apply greater hierarchical control.

## **The third sector**

It is now necessary to consider the impact of governance on third sector organisations. The Scottish Government (2014) defines the third sector as comprising community groups, voluntary organisations, charities, social enterprises, co-operatives and individual volunteers, and this is the definition used in this thesis. Billis (2010: 7) argues that NPM meant “for better or worse, third sector staff - in common with their colleagues in the public sector - became increasingly subjected to the virtues of concepts originally developed for the private sector”.

Kelly (2007: 1003) discusses how New Labour (in the last decade) saw the involvement of the third sector as pivotal in the provision of public services, increasing consumer choice and the personalisation of these services. It was believed that this would resolve “the problem of professional rigidities and self-seeking behaviour commonly found in public sector organisations” (Kelly, 2007: 1003). The third sector was seen as being closer to their client group, as their primary aim is to help clients rather than focusing on structures and procedural matters (Kelly, 2007: 1011). Collaboration was seen as a way to improve integration of these different sectors in the provision of public services.

Carmel & Harlock (2008) discuss how the state has encouraged capacity building in the third sector for it to deliver public services. This has meant that their traditional core objectives of working for the service user and advocacy have been marginalised, “they have been driven by performance and procurement regimes to

sell their services like the private sector” (Carmel & Harlock, 2008: 159).

Ironically, the characteristics of the third sector lauded by the government, namely innovation, closeness to service user, flexibility and lack of bureaucratic shackles “is subverted by the operational dependence on the discourse and techniques of performance and professionalism” applied by government (Carmel & Harlock, 2008: 165).

New Labour’s normative assumption of third sector organisations was that they were altruistically motivated. However, Kelly (2007: 1018) argues that these bodies are “being encouraged by government to engage in self-interest non-altruistic ways”. Chapman *et al* (2010: 619) discuss that the third sector work with a finite amount of resources, and within this sector ‘champions’ compete to promote their cause and this can lead to contention within the sector.

Carmel & Harlock (2008: 156) therefore see governance of the third sector by partnerships and performance procurement as methods used to institute the third sector as governable terrain. They argue that the control tools used on the third sector tend “to institute them as technocratic and generic service providers. In doing so it renders their specific social origins, ethos and goals absent”.

Kelly further argues that this role of delivering public services puts the third sector at risk; firstly by not being able to deliver these services and secondly by failing to meet their primary objectives based on their original specialised services. Equally, Kelly (2007: 1008) wonders if there are sufficient safeguards for the umbrella organisations for this sector, from their dependency on national or local funding.

She argues (2007: 1008) that third sector organisations risk losing their autonomy when delivering public services, as the government uses 'top down' methods through "regulation, inspection and steering through advice and guidance" to control them; their reputation may then be lost as they are seen as agents of the government.

## Conclusion

The literature reviewed here identifies a marked shift in the delivery of public services from bureaucracy and hierarchical government to governance and networks, and this has had a strong influence in the delivery of housing services over the last thirty years. Welfare services are now delivered by a plethora of organisations from the public, third and private sectors, and this is described as multi-level governance. This reconstruction of the welfare state occurred around the 1980/1990s, coinciding with the introduction of NPM into the public sector with the emphasis on private sector management outcomes.

During this time there has been a shift in the provision of social housing from it largely being provided by local authorities to an increase in RSL providers. The third sector has also become increasingly involved in delivering services and bringing them into the terrain of governance, meaning that, they too, became affected by NPM. It has been argued that involving the third sector in providing welfare services risks them losing or diluting their specific origins, and that the attributes of the third sector admired by government are lost in the process.

The shift from 'government to governance' assumes that the state no longer has the 'monopoly of expertise and resources to govern'; analysis of governance is therefore synonymous with the power of the state and the boundaries between the state and society. Commentators have been divided about whether the state has been 'hollowed out' and whether networks are autonomous from the state, or indeed, if they actually circumvent democracy. What is not in contention is that



there has been a realignment of state power and some argue that the shift is not from 'government to governance' rather the role of the state in governance, and how this interacts with agencies, activities and relationships. This shift impacts on how agencies relate to the state and others that they work with to provide public services and, particular to this research, how they provide housing services.

What has been identified in the literature is that NPM may have just been a short interlude between public administration and new public governance, or meta-governance with meta-regulation. It has been suggested that the role of the state may be more hierarchical now than it ever was under public administration. This is where the weakness and a gap in the literature occur. As Kjaer (2011: 111) highlights, the tensions and dilemmas caused by old and new forms of governance co-existing and interacting is unknown. Some commentators suggest that some welfare services, including social housing, cannot be analysed using governance theory if autonomy from the state cannot be observed. This stance perhaps fails to recognise that elements of government still remain alongside governance. Maybe the focus should be diverted from the characteristic of 'government to governance to meta-governance' and more towards how the remnants of past methods of state control interact and impact on the present. With an emphasis on the 'messiness' of co-existing regimes and how this impacts on providing and delivering welfare services in the era of collaboration.

The provision of housing services emulates this shift in welfare delivery with the increase in the third sector providing services. Of the four case study

organisations involved in this research, only one of them is directly from the public sector. This study explores issues of power, authority, institutional boundaries and organisational relationships in organisations that provide housing services for military veterans. It does this by adopting Stoker's (1998) governance framework. There is little governance literature on the provision of housing services. Therefore, the first question to frame this research is 'how do the case study organisations 'fit' a governance perspective?'

## CHAPTER 3

### THE QUEST FOR ORGANISATIONAL COLLABORATION

#### Introduction

It is no coincidence that the shift from government to governance, as described in the last chapter, coincides with the rise in the notion of networks and partnership working. In the 1980s the political agenda resulted in a shift, away from direct public service provision towards an increase in external providers from sectors out with the public sector delivering welfare services. This links with the changes from bureaucracy and a hierarchical system to the broader concept of governance (Glasby & Dickinson, 2008) and networks. During this period, Glasby & Dickinson (2008: xiv) highlight that partnerships were cited in official parliamentary records as follows: 38 times in 1989, 197 times in 1999, and 11,319 times in 2006.

Davies (2009: 81) describes how the growth in joined-up government is a response to ameliorate the fragmentation of services since the 1980s, to ‘suture the system together again’. Equally, Dickinson & Glasby (2010: 812) argue “that the current emphasis on partnership working may be driven by a desire to counter the fragmentation caused by previous market reform in public services”. This fragmentation presents “coordination difficulties for those commissioning and delivering public services as well as for users” (Fenwick, Miller & McTavish, 2012: 40; Rhodes, 2000). This delivery of services by a multitude of providers from different sectors has been described by Sullivan & Skelcher (2002: 20) as the ‘congested state’. This shift towards multiple service providers from the public,

third and private sectors draws a focus on the need for collaboration and associated partnership working.

Douglas (2009: 1) states that partnership working is a key twenty-first century concept and that it is “the only public policy show in town which has the potential to successfully address the big issues of our times such as social exclusion”. He goes on to stress that the importance of successful partnership working cannot “be underestimated, in making a difference to social problems, as individuals cannot work in isolation and in ‘theory’ agencies working together can produce more cohesive results”. This claim, however, is disputed and will be discussed later in the chapter.

Partnerships have been promoted by government to enable joined-up working; to provide efficient and cost effective delivery of policy and services. The Commission on the Reform of Public Services in Scotland (Christie Commission) stated that “public services are now facing their most serious challenges since the inception of the welfare state” because the demand for services is set to increase at a time when budgets are constrained. Two of the four key principles informing the reform process are related to collaboration:

“Public service providers must be required to work much more closely in partnership, to integrate service provision and thus improve the outcomes they achieve.” “Our whole system of public services - public, third and private

sectors - must become more efficient by reducing duplication and sharing services where possible” (Scottish Government, 2011b: vi).

The National Audit Office (2013: 5) states that “the integration of public services and programs offers government the potential for substantial cost savings and service improvement”.

There is a considerable body of research literature on collaboration between institutions that provide health and social care, and this literature is referred to in this chapter and provides guidance for this study. However, there is a paucity of literature or similar studies that emanates from housing services. Indeed, Cameron & Lloyd (2011: 361) highlight that housing has played only a minor role in the New Labour Government’s development of joint working in health and social care, despite the evident importance of housing in terms of health, and the emphasis and importance of service users remaining in their own homes. As Rummery (2006: 300) points out, “partnership working that only involved the ‘usual suspects’ of health and social care may well be involving the wrong partners altogether”. Therefore this study contributes to the literature and provides a distinct housing perspective, given that housing is crucial to an individual’s health.

This chapter will discuss the ‘terminological quagmire’ involved in defining organisational collaboration (Glasby & Dickinson, 2008) and policy networks. It will further explore what either enables or constrains collaboration, bearing in mind that there is cross over within these themes. It examines theories used to provide explanations for collaboration and networks and links this with the

discussion on governance in the last chapter. Whilst the last chapter focused on high level strategic theory based on the power of the state and organisational boundaries, the theories discussed in this chapter are more applicable to practice. These theories include Skelcher & Sullivan's (2008) explanations on collaboration, the Rhodes (1992) model of policy networks, Hudson & Hardy's (2002) frameworks on enablers and barriers to partnerships, Williams & Sullivan (2010) and also Williams' (2012) work on 'boundary spanners', i.e. the actors that work across organisational barriers and use agency to negotiate institutional structures. All of these concepts and theories are influenced by the interaction between structure and agency, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

### **Definitions of organisational collaboration and policy networks**

The governance literature discusses many different terms used to describe organisational collaboration and networks: partnerships, policy networks, governance networks, inter-agency working/cooperation, integration, joint working, mergers and contractual arrangements, to name but a few. The literature identifies that part of the problem is that there is not a consensus on the definition (Ling, 2000; Williams & Sullivan, 2009). Leathard (1994: 5, cited in Glasby & Dickinson, 2008: 2) identified 52 separate terms for partnership working, and concluded that this area was a 'terminological quagmire', partly because of political rhetoric and that it means different things to different people. There are also differences in the international literature. Unfortunately, the terms all describe similar but often subtly different phenomena, and are used interchangeably within the literature.

Three main themes describe organisational collaboration: contractual, networks and partnerships. Some of these terms are easier to define than others. For example, contracts are formal and legally defined agreements between organisations.

Equally as challenging to define is a policy network. Rhodes (2006: 1) acknowledges the difficulty in finding consensus on the concept of networks, and decides on the following definition: “a policy network is one of a cluster of concepts focusing on government links with, and dependence on, other state and societal actors”. He uses policy networks as a generic term to cover issue networks and policy communities (see Figure 3.0 for further explanation of these terms).

Rhodes (2006: 2) sees networks as being about both formal institutional and informal linkages between state and non state actors involved interdependently in “shared if endlessly negotiated beliefs and interests in public policymaking and implementation”. This links to this study and the selection of case studies from state and non state institutions, with the actors from these organisations working within networks to improve housing service provision for military veterans.

McGuire & Agranoff (2011: 266) use the term network “to refer to structures involving multiple nodes - agencies and organisations - with multiple linkages, ordinarily working on cross-boundary collaborative activities”.

Klijn & Skelcher (2007: 588) define governance networks as being “based on interdependencies, but not necessarily equity, between public, private and civil society actors’ networks”. This activity is described by McGuire & Agranoff (2011: 266) as public management networks and by Davies (2011: 10) as policy community networks. Blanco, Lowndes & Pratchett (2011: 297) argue that leading scholars, for example Rhodes (2007), employ the terms policy networks and governance networks interchangeably, and that ‘this fails to recognise the distinctive analytical offer’ of networks. They see policy networks as representing traditional hierarchical government and, in contrast governance networks, represent a shift towards a more plural mode of governing (Blanco, Lowndes & Pratchett, 2011: 299).

**Figure 3.0 Features of policy communities & characteristics of issue networks**

<b>Features of policy communities</b>
Shared values and frequent interaction
Exchange of resources, with group leaders able to regulate this
A relative balance of power amongst members
<b>Features of issue networks</b>
Large and diverse
Fluctuating levels of contacts and lower levels of agreement than policy communities
Varying resources and an inability to regulate their use on a collective basis
Unequal power
[Source Hill, 2014: 157]



According to Gilchrist (2007), networks are often the precursor to more formalised joint partnerships. Partnerships are seen to be harder to define, partly because the interpretation may be different between the agencies involved. Sullivan & Skelcher (2002: 6) describe partnerships as:

“Negotiation between people from different agencies committed to working together over more than the short term; aims to secure the delivery of benefits or added value which could not have been provided by any single agency acting alone or through the employment of others; and includes a formal articulation of a purpose and a plan to bind partners together” and that it is “differentiated from contracts because of the requirement for joint decision-making over more than the short term”.

They go on to describe how networks differ from partnerships emphasising that partnerships require ‘formal articulation of the process’. Glasby & Dickinson (2008: 7) discuss how services tend “to be organised on the basis of hierarchies (top-down and bureaucratic), markets (exchange based on goods and services) or networks (in-formal multiple organisations)”. They argue that this is part of the problem with the definition, as all three can be described as partnership working. Rummary (2009: 1798) argues that “a lack of clarity around the definition of ‘partnership’ and associated terms have diverted attention away from the focus on outcomes”, emphasising that “if we do not know what a ‘partnership’ is, how can we measure it?” To add to the terminology confusion, the definition for collaborative governance that follows is similar to the definition of partnerships:

“A governing arrangement where one or more public agencies directly engage non-state stakeholders in a collective decision-making process that is formal, consensus-oriented and deliberative and that aims to make or implement public policy or manage public programs or assets” (Ansell & Gash, 2007: 544).

Skelcher & Sullivan (2008: 757) highlight that the degree of collaboration will depend on the “context and the actors, this again makes it difficult to narrow down the definition”. They describe cooperation between agencies as occurring within a range from cooperation up to coadunation (see below). This provides an explanation for the most basic type of organisational cooperation up to the most involved, coadunation, which perhaps would be better described as a merger:

“Co-operation - shared information and mutual support.

Co-ordination - common tasks and compatible goals.

Collaboration - integrated strategies and collective purpose.

Coadunation (or merger) - unified structure and combined cultures”

(Skelcher & Sullivan, 2008: 757).

Davies (2011: 63) found that partnerships of community activities and public managers drew on competing values in defining partnerships, and that “these value conflicts were sublimated and closed to conscious deliberation”. He uses Bourdieu’s insight to explain why partners from diverse backgrounds fail to

understand each other. Discussing how “they were working towards different goals but the de-politicised and consensual culture of the partnerships meant these differences were not surfaced, let alone debated”. He quotes Voloshinov (1986: 23, cited in Davies 2011: 64) to explain this difference in language:

“The rub is that different groups with radically different points of view share a single language. Yet, when they speak, their characteristic evaluations can produce quite different meanings within the same words. The result is that the singular nature of the language can serve to mask the multiple and conflicting meanings which different groups realise when they speak. Powerful groups will seek to reinforce this masking of diversity and conflict by seeking to extinguish or drive inward the struggle between social value judgments in language.”

In this research the following definition will be used: collaboration is used to describe any type of joint working. Contracts describe purely legal contracts between agencies. Networks describe both formal and informal linkages, and partnerships describe formalised arrangements. In some ways this is too simplistic an explanation, as there are different terms used within each of these definitions. However, this simplistic lens acts as a point to aid further analysis and reporting by this study.

### **Barriers and enablers to collaboration**

This part of the chapter discusses the barriers and enablers to collaboration; it is worth highlighting that these issues are complex and they do not always fit neatly

under these two headings, for at times the issues straddle them both. Glasby & Dickinson (2008: 27) argue that whilst partnership working is promoted as a good thing and intrinsically it makes sense, there is very little evidence to support the idea that partnership working is more beneficial than organisations working without collaborating. Sullivan & Skelcher (2002: 35) argue that collaboration is the exception, and this is because of different organisational interests, professional agendas and ways of working. Early literature on partnership working focused on the process of how well the agencies interact, resulting in very little and patchy knowledge about the actual outcome of the process; for example the benefit for the service user (Glasby & Dickinson, 2008; Rummery, 2009: 1798). Williams & Sullivan (2010: 13) state that success will mean different things to the individuals involved in the collaboration and this is why it is difficult to measure. Rummery (2009: 1802), drawing on a comparative literature review of partnerships between health and social care, concluded that there was a lack of an evidence base and that it could be difficult to “link particular outcomes with particular types of service input, whether involving partnership work/joined up governance or more traditional patterns of service funding and delivery”. Cameron & Lloyd (2011: 373), in their study of supporting people health pilots, thought that the success of the pilots may not be attributed to partnership working “but to the fact that something is better than nothing, whoever provides it”.

Equally Hunter *et al* (2011: 17) argue that partnerships are “untested and unproven assumptions”, assuming that the necessary skills are available and indeed that all the agencies involved will be working at optimal capacity within their own

organisations, with no allowance for ‘intra-agency malfunctioning’. The hope for partnerships between different actors camouflages the competing demands. Thus, “overlying a partnership on them is unlikely to be a successful strategy and could have the unintended consequence of bringing partnerships into disrepute” (Hunter *et al*, 2011: 17).

Glasby & Dickinson (2008: 59 & 2010) highlight that partnerships may not always produce cost savings, and that the complexity and ambiguity of the relationships ‘generate confusion and weaken accountability’. Williams & Sullivan (2010: 9) focus on the area of capacity and capability, discussing how working in collaboration is not seen as core business but as ‘a bolt-on activity’ with little resources attached. They predict this trend will continue at a time of severe financial restrictions, highlighting how this type of activity requires more resources instead of over reliance on staff with existing heavy workloads. Equally, Hunter *et al* (2011: 15) state that “partnerships incur significant cost and many contribute less to improved outcomes than is claimed”. Further, Rummery (2006: 296) explains that partnership working is not cost neutral and this may divert resources from other activities.

Williams & Sullivan’s (2010: 7) research into integration in social care highlighted that the people involved in the collaboration were “constantly frustrated by over-bureaucratic governance arrangements, lack of resources, inappropriate leadership, professional and institutional barriers, and the protracted nature of decision-making processes”. Dickinson & Glasby (2010: 815) state that it is not

that partnerships cannot work but “misunderstandings about the nature and the potential of partnership working mean that many partnerships are designed in ways which mean that they are unlikely to meet the very high aspirations of those who form them”. Similarly, in relation to networks, Rhodes argues (2006: 25) “the spread of networks also undermines coordination. Despite strong pressures for more coordination [which he describes as the holy grail of modern government], the practice is ‘modest’”.

Carmel & Harlock (2008: 159) highlight that the discourse of partnership working disguises the important disparity between the third and public sector, and this may be why partnerships fail because the third sector are not generic service providers. “Third sector concerns for their communities and clients may limit their participation in partnerships; equally decision making may largely be dominated by public sector partners” (Carmel & Harlock 2008: 159). This argument appears one sided as the public sector is also likely to be concerned for their clients. Perhaps the public/third sector attributes are less polarised than they appear but maybe the drivers to collaborate are different between the third and public sector. Williams & Sullivan (2010: 7) discuss conflicting motivation to collaborate. Highlighting that whilst trust and autonomy are seen as prerequisites for collaboration, they have “different implications in the voluntary and mandated forms of working”. Ensuring consensus at the start of collaboration risks generating paralysis, whilst negotiating sufficient consensus to proceed “risks conflict and dissent at a later point” (Williams & Sullivan 2010: 9).

Power/resource imbalances are frequently identified in network analysis (Ansell & Gash, 2007; Hudson, 2004; Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002). Equally, networks can be manipulated by stronger actors and that ‘ideological consensus’ can be difficult to achieve especially if one profession claims ownership of knowledge of the social problem, commonly found in professional networks (Ansell & Gash, 2007: 551; Hudson, 2004: 81). They argue that often there are adversarial relationships, but the goal of collaborative governance is to develop cooperative ones. As Rummery (2009: 1802) argues, partnership working may cause professionals to protect their organisational boundaries thus subverting the activity, “and thus give less attention to outward concerns”.

Hudson & Lowe (2009: 160) state that “policy networks matter because they tell us a great deal about the ways in which power is distributed among different groups in a particular policy sector”. This links to the last chapter’s discussion of the third of Stoker’s propositions, governance as theory regarding power dependencies. The difference between traditional hierarchical structures and networks is that the former has deeper vertical top down transmission lines of power, whilst networks have broader diffuse horizontal power transmission lines. The latter has been criticised for lacking legitimacy, accountability and being undemocratic, and this is discussed further in Chapter Two (Papadopoulos, 2007; Davies, 2011; Rummery, 2006).

Power is also relevant to the type of policy community. Hudson & Lowe (2009: 160) highlight that implementation of policy change is more likely to be resisted in

strong policy networks such as health, compared to weaker policy networks such as supporting the unemployed. Moreover, policy networks with strong professional memberships were more able to resist policies being imposed upon them, compared to issue networks that lacked high-level linkage.

Kaehne's (2012: 17) research into partnerships, formed to deliver transition support services for young people with learning difficulties at six local authority areas in England and Wales, found that "the main difficulty of transition planning partnerships and evaluating their outcomes seems to rest with the complex interplay between the strategic and operational level". Davies' (2009: 83) research on Community Planning Partnerships in Scotland and Local Strategic Partnerships in England, which was agent focused and employed methods that included observations, interviews and textual analysis, found that the partnerships were not that well joined up.

Davies highlights (2009: 84) that senior staff sit on high-level management boards, whilst the middle managers (delivering services) sit at group level and lack the authority to make resource allocation. "In addition, partnerships commonly lack mechanisms to ensure that vague collective priorities percolate down organisations" (Davies, 2009: 90). He concluded that consensus in the partnerships were shallow, and argues that "shallow consensus enabled stakeholders to proceed 'as if' they shared norms, meanings and goals but meant that silo<sup>1</sup> practices remained unchallenged in thematic partnerships, where like-minded actors

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<sup>1</sup> Silo practice describes decisions/actions being restricted within organisational boundaries



reinforced them”. Davies (2009: 80) further argues that the partnership ethos involves valuing consensus and not conflict, so political tensions are taboo; as a result ‘silo’ practices remain unchallenged and this limits joined-up government.

### **Theories exploring organisational collaboration and networks**

This part of the chapter considers theories and frameworks that explore collaboration and networks, and their relevance to this study. This is followed by the chapter’s conclusion.

Skelcher & Sullivan (2008) discuss different theories to explain collaboration performance, and some of them link with the last chapter’s discussion on how governance in practice affects democracy, namely democratic theory emphasises that collaborations are seldom designed on the basis of representative theory (Skelcher & Sullivan, 2008: 756). Resource theory gives an explanation for collaboration in which one or more organisations have more resources than the others do. Skelcher & Sullivan (2008: 758) describe this “process as characterised by bargaining and conflict”. Institutional theory provides an explanation for “institutional factors in creating a normative environment for collaboration”. Rules, norms and practice can change over time “but the process of change can result in the co-existence of ‘old’ and ‘new’ ways of doing things (Lowndes, 1997, cited in Skelcher & Sullivan, 2008: 760). Discourse theory gives an explanation for the hegemonic acceptance of partnership “as a taken for granted way of undertaking public governance, in opposition to ‘out of date’ public bureaucracies” (Skelcher & Sullivan, 2008: 763).

This section will consider policy networks; the literature has been heavily influenced by the Rhodes model of policy networks. The model is based on five propositions: 1) Organisations are dependent on others for resources, 2) To achieve goals organisations have to exchange resources, 3) Although constrained, the dominant organisation retains discretion, 4) “The dominant coalition employs strategies within known *rules of the game to regulate the process of exchange*” and 5) “Variations in the degrees of discretion are a product of the goals and the relative power potential of interacting organizations”. Rhodes & Marsh (1992: 10) highlight that power within these relations is a combination of resources, rules of the game and the process of the exchange.

Rhodes (2006: 10) discusses two broad schools of thought in relation to policy networks as theory. Firstly, power-dependence is described as organisations being dependent on each other, exchanging resources and using resources to maximise influence; it is seen as game-like and being rooted in trust, and networks having a significant degree of autonomy from the state. Secondly, he discusses rational choice theory seeing policy networks as a blend of rational choice and new institutionalism from which actor-centred institutionalism is produced. He quotes Scharpf (1997: 195) as an explanation: “policy is the outcome of the interactions of resourceful and bounded-rational actors whose capabilities, preferences, and perceptions are largely, but not completely, shaped by the institutionalised norms within which they interact”. Rhodes explains it as agreed rules building trust and fostering communication whilst reducing uncertainty, and he sees this as the ‘basis of non-hierarchic coordination’. Nonetheless, Smith argues (1993: 68) that state

actors in these policy communities increase state capacity to make and implement policy. State actors have greater resources and therefore control the rules of the game and entrance to policy communities, although the state cannot ignore pressure groups.

The above theories link to governance and theories of the state, which Marsh & Rhodes (1992: 268) describe as macro-level theories. They describe policy networks as being at the meso-level, seeing the concept as helping 'to classify the patterns of relationships between interest groups and governments'. They identify that the meso-level concept needs to be located within a number of macro-level theories of the state, and this links to the use of governance theory in this study. More recently, there has been an increase in interest in the micro-level and this is related to actors' activity within organisations.

Dowding (2001: 94) provides an explanation of different types of networks (see Figure 3.1). More recently, the literature has concentrated on networks and policy communities.

**Figure 3.1 Dowding's Different models of urban politics**

	Policy communities	Issue networks	Professional dominated sub-system	Advocacy coalition framework	Regime theory
Linkage between actors	Close	Problematic	Variable	Variable	Close formal and informal
Degree of integration	High	Variable	Variable	Variable	High
Values of actors	Shared	Distinct	Professional values dominate	Distinct dominate	Shared
Rules of interaction	Agreed	Not agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed
Type of interest	Shared	Distinct	Professions dominate	Distinct	Shared
Resources of actors	Equal	Unequal	Unequal	Unequal	Unequal
Number of members	Low	High	Low	Variable	Low
Continuity of membership	High	Low	High	Variable	Variable

Policy styles across nations & sectors	Vary	Vary	Same	Vary	Vary
Levels of government	One	Several	Several	Several	One
[Extracted from Dowding (2001: 94)]					

Dowding (1995) argued that the concept of policy networks is a metaphor, and as such has limited potential value, and he criticised both Rhodes' work and Marsh & Smith's dialectical approach to policy networks. Dowding (2001: 89) later suggested that networks could be used as explanatory models "to demonstrate the important structural features of networks which cause certain types of policy outcomes, and thereby map structures of power". Marsh & Smith (2000: 4) describe the dialectical approach to the study of policy networks as "a dialectical relationship is an interactive relationship between two variables in which each affects the other in a continuing iterative process". To use the policy network approach as an explanatory variable they saw it as involving three relationships, namely between structure and agency, network and context and network and outcome. Marsh & Smith (2001: 535) defend their approach against Dowding's (2001) criticism by stating that metaphors are useful and that the policy network approach has always attempted to go beyond a metaphor.

Hudson & Lowe (2009: 166) discuss the debate between Dowding and Marsh & Smith and consider that it may have led the discourse into a blind alley. They consider the work of Kickert & Koppenjan (1997), who state that the UK perspective has focused on network characteristics, formations and “to a lesser extent - their effects on policy outcome, whereas the impact of the existence of networks on governance and public management hardly receives attention”. In contrast, Kickert & Koppenjan’s (1997) work focused on what the emergence of networks has meant for those working on the front line of public services - “how it changes their working practices, its implication for management processes and so on”. It is about the impact of networks on the implementation of policy at the micro level. Hudson & Lowe (2009: 1670) argue that the real strength of this approach is that it is a “bold attempt to think through the implications of networks for governance and to offer strategies for maximising their potential for improving the quality of public policy”. Their work also emphasises that the state plays a key role in networks and this links to the last chapter’s discussion on the contested notion of the ‘hollowing out’ of the state.

Hudson & Lowe (2009: 169) state that policy network analysis should not be used in isolation from other forms of analysis. This links to the theory of governance being adopted in this study and is relevant because networks provide a focus on the means of how governance takes place in practice. They conclude that policy network analysis “is at its most powerful when combined with other explanations of change and used, for instance, to explain why broad changes have had more impact in one policy sector rather than another”. They also see its strength “in

highlighting resistance to change and the ways in which change is resisted”.

Hudson & Low emphasise the need to understand “how those creating, implementing and managing policy seek to utilise inter-organisational networks and partnerships” focusing on the individual. This is key to understanding how organisations in this study negotiate their working relationships with others to obtain their individual objectives.

Network theory links to governance theory discussed in the last chapter, with the emphasis on the shift from a centralised Westminster model to decentralised networks. Börzel (2011: 51) differentiates between governance and networks by arguing that networks can describe “the context and factors leading to joint policy-making, the governance approach focuses on the structures and processes through which joint policy-making is organised”. Börzel (2011: 52) argues that “the concept of networks as ‘new governance’ has diffused into virtually all sub-disciplines of political science”. Börzel (2011: 52) sees networks as being linked to governance and next to hierarchies and markets, and that networks function by non-hierarchical coordination based on the exchanges of resources/or trust. Where governments and markets fail, networks are seen as the only form of governance in the provision of services. As many other commentators have highlighted, Börzel (2011: 52) sees there has been a difficulty with accountability and legitimacy of network governance. Moreover, it is unclear whether networks of resource dependent state and non-state actors actually increase the capacity of governance. Networks not only differ in structure, they can differ functionally.

For example, activities can include standard setting, service provision or knowledge generation (Börzel, 2011: 57).

The above theories provide an understanding for collaboration and networks and fit with governance theory. They add to the study by providing a strategic explanation as to why the shift towards governance has placed an emphasis on the need for organisations to work together in networks. Therefore networks are important as they are the conduit to enable governance. This section now considers frameworks for analysis of collaborations in practice. Figure 3.2 summarises Hudson & Hardy's (2002: 53) six principles of successful partnerships, which was found to be particularly useful to study because it provides an understanding of practice in partnership working. It is these principles that were employed to guide the topic guide Appendix E and the case study protocol Appendix F.



**Figure 3.2: Hudson & Hardy's Six Principles of Successful Partnerships**

Principle	Title	Characteristics
1	Acknowledgement of the need for partnership	Prerequisite - partners' appreciation of their interdependence.
2	Clarity & realism of purpose	Once values & principles are agreed, aims & objectives can be defined. Aims & objectives that are not realistic = diminishing of commitment.
3	Commitment & ownership	1 & 2 need to be supported & reinforced, particularly by senior management.
4	Development & maintenance of trust	Trust is needed for the most enduring & successful partnerships. Trust is hard won and easily lost.
5	Establishment of clear & robust partnership arrangements	Should be focused on processes & outcomes rather than structure & inputs. How is each partner accountable?
6	Monitoring, review & organisational learning	Helps cement trust. May provide evidence of commitment & costs & benefits to partners.
[Extracted from Hudson & Hardy (2002: 53-62)]		

Lamie & Ball (2010: 125) adopted this framework to evaluate community planning partnerships in Scotland, and concluded that these principles provided a useful checklist to guide the development of new partnerships. Willis (2012: 168) adopted similar themes for his study of partnerships within the public sector, but noted that the concepts of leadership and management skills were lacking.

Principle four discusses trust. Equally the literature on networks focuses on trust (Rhodes, 2007; Ansell & Gash, 2007: 546; Agranoff, 2007; Hudson *et al*, 1999: 248; Mandell & Keast, 2008: 729). In the absence of hierarchical structures, trust is seen as the glue of networks, with the implication that a high level of trust must be present if there has been a transformation from hierarchical to network systems (Davies, 2011: 14). Hudson & Hardy (2002: 57) discuss the development and maintenance of trust and see it as being “simultaneously the most self-evident and the most elusive of the principles that underpin successful partnership working.” They describe how the development of trust increases the likelihood of successful partnership and “it is hard won but easily lost”.

“The health of any partnership could be measured in terms of the ‘sacrifice’ that one partner is prepared to make for the collective good, that is, the willingness to subsume self-interest to general interest. The mutual acknowledgement and acceptance of such ‘altruism’ helps to build trust and cement relationships” (Hudson & Hardy, 2002: 59).

The nuances of trust are not, however, discussed or described in any great detail within the literature. Klijn (2008: 520) highlights that “the importance of trust is often mentioned, yet there are no systematic studies on the subject”. Aitken (2012: 134) considers trust in relationships between officers and residents in an urban regeneration project and suggests that trust can both encourage and discourage participation. She discusses how the “literature rarely defines or discusses trust conceptually”, and suggests that there is an insufficient conceptualisation of trust, with a lack of focus on how the multi-faceted nature of trust is measured and identifies concerns of the “superficiality in the literature’s application of the term” (Aitken, 2012: 134).

Williams (2012: 49) argues that trust is a complex and contested notion. He highlights that the “functional interpretation of trust ignores the fact that power can be hidden behind a façade of “trust” and a rhetoric of “collaboration” and can be pursued to promote vested interests through the manipulation and capitulation of weaker parties”. Skelcher & Sullivan (2008: 769) discuss how successful collaboration is often “causally attributed to good leadership, trust building, and co-operative behaviour”, and they suggest this may be surface manifestations of a more complex phenomenon. Stoker (2000: 106, cited in Davies, 2011: 67) commented that “trust on which governance arrangements often rely may prove too weak to carry the burden of it”.

The discourse around networks and collaboration may encourage actors to contribute success to the discourse of trust, rather than them thinking intuitively

or deeply about the rhetoric surrounding partnership working. Equally, trust is a contested notion, so simply attributing trust as an enabler of collaboration fails to provide an explanation of the multi-faceted nature of trust.

Nevertheless, the benefit of Hudson & Hardy's (2002: 53) work is that it recognises that even when some measure of success is achieved, within the framework of successful partnerships, "some barriers to partnerships are more difficult to overcome than others". Figure 3.3 details Hudson & Hardy's five categories of barriers to coordination.

Figure 3.3: Hudson & Hardy's Five Categories of Barriers to Coordination

Framework

**Structural**

- Fragmentation of service responsibilities across agency boundaries both within and between sectors.
- Inter-organisational complexity.
- Non-coterminosity of boundaries.
- Competition-based systems of governance.

**Procedural**

- Differences in planning horizons and cycles.
- Differences in accountability arrangements.
- Differences in information systems and protocols regarding access and confidentiality.

**Financial**

- Differences in budgetary cycles and accounting procedures.
- Differences in funding mechanisms and bases.
- Differences in the stocks and flows of financial resources

**Professional/cultural**

- Differences in ideologies and values.
- Professional self-interests and autonomy.
- Inter-professional domain dissensus.
- Threats to job security.
- Conflicting views about user interests and roles.

**Status and legitimacy**

- Organisational self-interest and autonomy.
- Inter-organisational domain dissensus.
- Differences in legitimacy between elected and appointed groups.

[Sourced from Hudson & Hardy (2002: 54)]

These barriers to coordination fit with governance theory by focusing on institutional boundaries and this, in turn, correlates with the concept of boundary spanners and the duality of structure and agency. The duality of structure and agency is present in all of the above theories. This paradigm is useful in this research to explore the influence of agency (referring to the actions of an individual or group) of boundary spanners, interacting with structure (institutions, regimes, rules and boundaries) and organisational boundaries to collaborate. Williams & Sullivan (2009: 1) discuss the role of structure and agency in relation to the integration of health and social care (see Figure 3.4). They argue that the structure-agency debate is highly polarised, and given that there is probably a middle ground, the position they adopted was that “actors make outcomes but the parameters of their capacity to act is ultimately set by the structured context in which they find themselves” (Hay, 2002: 254). In other words, whilst structures are developed by agency or individuals, structures control how individuals act in society. King (2005: 231) highlights that the problem with the dichotomy over structure and agency is that structure risks emasculating individual agency, whilst agency risks overemphasising individual freedom. He goes on to suggest that the two concepts should not be seen rigidly or poles apart, but rather as dynamic contexts of social interaction. Giddens’ (2001: 669) theory of structuration ‘the duality of structure’ means, “all social action presumes the existence of structure. But at the same time structure presumes action, because ‘structure’ depends on regularities of human behaviour”.

**Figure 3.4: Structure and Agency**

Structure	Agency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social and Economic Drivers</li><li>• Legislative Context</li><li>• Institutional Framework</li><li>• Financial and Resource Framework</li><li>• History of Collaboration: Know How and Experience</li><li>• Accountability Structures</li><li>• Organizational Cultures</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leadership</li><li>• Inter-professionality</li><li>• Integrated Working</li><li>• Personal Skills, Capabilities and Experience</li><li>• Boundary Spanners</li></ul>

[Sourced from Williams & Sullivan (2010: 2)]

So far, this review has focused mostly on structural elements of collaboration.

Williams (2012: 23) argues, “the literature on collaboration favours an organisational and institutional focus at the expense of micro-level examination”.

The importance of the actors involved in collaboration is seen as crucial to its success.

Lipsky’s (1980: 3) seminal work on street level bureaucrats (SLBs) provides a focus on the role of the actors who provide the service directly to recipients. They are “public sector workers who interact directly with citizens and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work”. He goes on to discuss how SLBs “determine the eligibility of citizens for government benefits and sanctions”, thus he argues, “they hold the keys to the dimension of citizenship”. SLBs can apply

central policy in ways that suit their working practices, and this can result in quite different policy outcomes from their initial prescription.

Durose (2007: 220) states that since Lipsky's (1980) theory of SLB, governance structures have changed significantly and it now does not adequately describe the move from government to governance. She (2007: 231) goes on to argue that "front line workers are no longer 'street level bureaucrats', they retain discretion but are asked to go beyond this. Front line workers are now creative actors, whose roles emphasise pragmatism and negotiation and focus on skills facilitated by local knowledge, experience and networks" (Durose, 2007: 231).

This focus on networks is relevant here, given the shift from government to governance. It could be expected to increase time spent by SLBs spanning boundaries within networks.

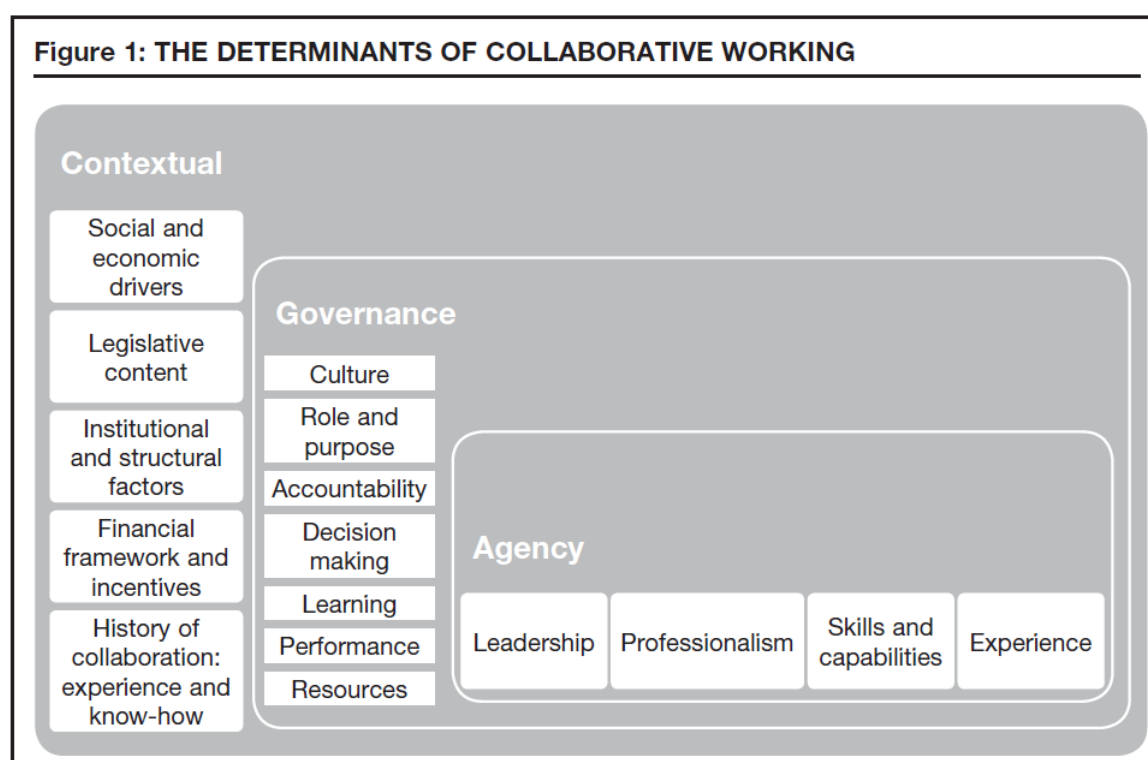
Lipsky's (2010: 216) updated version of his 1980's book discusses the rise in the contracting out of public services to those organisations outwith government. He states that SLBs may now not work directly for government, but he argues that they are still likely to fit the SLB profile for a number of reasons, including that "the controls, performance measure and accountability imposed on private agencies by public authorities have become increasingly rigorous, thus driving out differences between the sectors"; all of these activities being relevant to the governance literature. This assumption also fits with Carmel & Harlock's (2008) work on the third sector as a governable terrain (as previously discussed in this chapter). The accountability of the SLB has traditionally been seen as posing a control problem for central government. Hupe & Hill (2007: 279) argue that



through the rise in governance, and its associated multiple accountability, it changes the accountability of SLBs and this “for some, perhaps lessens the need to worry too much about ‘control deficits’” (Hupe & Hill 2007: 296).

Williams (2012: 4) describes actors working across organisational boundaries as ‘boundary spanners’ and they can be found at different levels within organisations, from senior level to those on the front-line, providing the actual service. He suggests that there are two types of boundary spanners; those whose roles are dedicated to working across boundaries, and a significantly larger cohort of public sector actors who are spending an increasing amount of their time engaged in this activity. A study by Agranoff & McGuire (2003, cited in Agranoff 2007: 9) found that “about 20 percent of public managers’ time is spent in collaborative activity outside of the home government organisation”. Given that this study is now ten years old, it is reasonable to assume that public managers now spend more time on such collaborative activities.

**Figure 3.5: The Determinants of Collaborative Working**



[Sourced from Williams & Sullivan (2010: 5)]

Williams (2012: 25) discusses the complex interaction between structure and agency in organisational collaboration, “where actors, operating within institutional parameters, attempt to alter constraints into capabilities is where collaboration occurs across organisational boundaries”. In other words, the actors or boundary spanners use agency to negotiate organisational structures (cultures, accountability and resource structures as described in Figure 3.5) to collaborate with others. Boundary spanners’ activities link to the theory of governance, as well as the frameworks that measure partnership working, because they are faced with the challenges of “paradoxes and ambiguities - managing in and across multiple modes of governance, the blurring of personal and professional

relationships, the dilemmas of multiple accountabilities and appreciating multiple framing processes” (William, 2012: 4).

To summarise, the literature in this chapter on governance, networks and partnership working has some overlapping themes and these are demonstrated in Figure 3.6.

**Figure 3.6: Overlapping themes between the Stoker's (1998) Five Propositions of Governance, Rhodes's (1992) model of policy networks and Hudson & Hardy's (2002) Five Barriers to Coordination**

<b>Stoker's Five Propositions of Governance (1998: 18-23)</b>	<b>Rhodes Model of Policy Networks (1992:10)</b>	<b>Hudson &amp; Hardy's Five Barriers to Coordination (2002: 54)</b>	<b>Overlapping themes/Practice implications</b>
Proposition 1 Institutions and actors that are drawn from but also beyond government.	Organisations are dependent on others for resources.	Fragmentation of service responsibilities across agency boundaries both within and between sectors. Inter-organisations complexity.	The messy delivery of public services. Difficulty for practitioners to manage and for service users to access services.
Proposition 2 Blurring of boundaries and responsibilities.	To achieve goals organisations have to exchange resources.	Non-coterminosity of boundaries. Differences in planning horizons and cycles. Differences in accountability arrangements. Differences in information systems and protocols regarding access and confidentiality.	The aspects of governance where boundary spanners negotiate organisational boundaries and barriers to work with others to provide services.
Proposition 3	Although constrained, the	Differences in funding mechanisms	Tensions in funding particularly

Power dependencies.	dominant organisation retains discretion.	and bases. Competition-based systems of governance.	when some organisations are more dependent on others.
Proposition 4 Autonomy of self governing networks.	“The dominant coalition employs strategies within, known as the rules of the game, to regulate the process of exchange”	Differences in ideologies and values. Professional self-interests and autonomy. Conflicting views about user interests and roles.	Incompatibility: ethos, bespoke/generic service provision, objective of collaboration, ability of actors to work across boundaries, third/public sector autonomy and state dependency differences.
Proposition 5 Get things done which does not rest on the power of government command or authority.	“Variations in the degrees of discretion are a product of the goals and the relative power potential of in acting organisations”.	Organisational self-interest and autonomy. Inter-professional domain dissensus. Differences in legitimacy between elected and appointed groups.	Incompatible service provision objectives between organisations, leading to failure. Government increasing seen as brokering services. Legitimacy of mixed service provision questioned.

These overlapping themes are utilised in the analysis that forms Chapter Seven. The next section concludes this chapter.

## CONCLUSION

The rise in partnership working and networks has been attributed to the shift from government to governance, and the associated need to counter the fragmentation of service delivery. The normative assumption that emerges from the review of the literature is that collaboration between the public, third and private sectors makes sense; government promotes it as a cure all to counteract the fragmented delivery of public services, to reduce duplication and cut costs. Working with others is motivated to provide public services to address society's 'wicked issues'. The reality is that organisational collaboration is complex and barriers to the process include over-bureaucratic governance arrangements, lack of resources, inappropriate leadership, professional and institutional barriers, the protracted nature of decision-making processes and it is treated as a bolt-on activity, thus poorly resourced (Williams & Sullivan 2010).

Commentators argue that there is little evidence to suggest that working in collaboration is more beneficial than working without collaboration. Also, there is a complicated interplay between the strategic and operational level, and the strategic reasoning for collaboration might not percolate down to the practice level. Trust is frequently mentioned as the 'glue' of networks. It can be argued that 'trust' remains under conceptualised and superficially applied without deeper analysis of the multi-faceted nature of trust. Additionally, the definition and terminology used to describe organisational

collaboration and networks lacks clarity and makes outcomes difficult to measure. The terms are inconsistently applied in both literature and practice, and this appears to be because of political rhetoric, collaboration meaning different things to different people and the international interpretation of the literature.

Much of the literature is dominated by discussion of organisational structures, for example institutional cultures, boundaries and resources, and this brings structure and agency aspects into focus. Lipsky's (1980) work on street level bureaucrats provides an explanation for the role of agency in the provision of public services, and his updated 2010 version acknowledges the shift in service provision from bureaucracies to networks. However, it does not provide an explanation for the role of agency in the growth of partnership working; therefore it is less relevant to this research than originally anticipated. Durose (2007) argues that the role of street level bureaucrats has changed with the shift from government to governance, and that these actors are now more involved in networks.

Networks sit alongside hierarchy and markets, and are seen as a way to deliver public services where hierarchy and markets have failed. It is described as a meso level concept, whereas the macro level describes structural issues of power and this links to governance theory. As with the macro level, the meso level is related to power, but in this instance it is about power relationships between interested groups and governments.

Börzel (2011) differentiates between networks and governance by explaining that networks are about the activities leading to joint policy-making, whilst governance focuses on the structures and processes involved and how joint policy-making is organised.

Rhodes (2006) describes the power-dependence and rational choices to explain networks; the former is related to dependence and resources exchange, with game like activities rooted in trust. He uses rational choice to provide an explanation for policy network being a blend of rational choice and new institutionalism, and from this actor-centred institutionalism is produced. More recently there has been a growing interest in the how the individual interacts within networks at the micro level, and how this affects governance. This fits with the debate on structure and agency and collaboration.

Whilst the dichotomy of structure and agency cannot provide an explanation to explore the complexity of collaboration, the interaction between them can. As the actors involved in collaboration, i.e. the boundary spanners, use their agency to negotiate institutional structures, the success or failure of these actions links directly to why organisational collaboration appears so difficult to achieve.

This research will illuminate some of the complexity in organisational relationships, illustrated through the provision of housing services for military



veterans. It will fill a gap in the literature as there is a paucity of literature on collaboration in housing, and none on how this impacts on housing military veterans. Additionally, it will contribute to the literature on networks, which so far has been theoretically driven but can be criticised for being empirically light. This thesis can illuminate what takes place in networks, in the provision of housing.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **HOUSING AS THE ESSENTIAL PRECURSOR TO MILITARY VETERANS' WELFARE**

#### **Introduction**

Housing is fundamental to a person's health, well-being, employment prospects, relationships and ability to participate in society. This study focuses on military veterans and housing, as it is clear that the housing outcome is on the essential pathway to veterans' welfare. The military are unique in society; whilst serving, they commit to unlimited liability to the state, with the implication that they may be compelled to give up their life in their employment. When they leave the armed forces, they usually have to give up their housing and social networks too. Most leavers make a successful transition into civilian life, but some encounter difficulties that are complex and manifold; a significant issue for this group is accessing housing.

Chapter One set out the profile of the armed forces, providing a background to the focus on this group and the supply of housing. The aim of this chapter is to link ex-forces' personnel (veterans') issues with policy initiatives and the broader provision of housing services. This chapter examines how the specific characteristics of veterans may contribute to them having difficulty accessing housing. It discusses the implications of policy initiatives, such as the Military Covenant, on the provision of social housing for veterans. It then reviews the broader issues surrounding how housing is produced and consumed, and discusses housing allocation and homelessness legislation, before concluding.

As discussed in Chapter One, it is recognised that veterans are over-represented in the homeless population. It is now necessary to consider some of the reasons why, and this section will review the literature on this issue. Research in the UK found that people in the armed forces with mental health difficulties are likely to leave the services earlier, and that this vulnerable group are more likely to face social exclusion and homelessness (Iverson *et al*, 2005: 175). Iverson's study noted other factors which can lead to poor outcomes on leaving the forces, including social inequality pre-enlistment, institutionalisation and the culture of drinking whilst serving in the armed forces. The research was based on a longitudinal study of a large cohort of military service personnel and veterans designed to study the outcomes of individuals who had left the armed forces.

Johnsen *et al*'s (2008: 30) study focused on the experiences of ex-service homeless personnel in London; it found that army recruits are more likely to have come from disadvantaged backgrounds and therefore are disproportionately affected by structural issues, such as inequality and poverty. Additionally, they have lower levels of educational attainment. A Commons Select Committee (2013) found that 28% of Army recruits were under the age of 18 years, whereas the Navy and the RAF only recruited 5% and 8% under that age respectively. An Ofsted inspection found that of those recruited into the Army in 2012, 3.5% were found to have literacy levels equivalent to a 7 to 8 year old, and 39% had a literacy level of an 11 year old (Parliament, 2013).

Van Standen *et al* (2007: 929) carried out research on vulnerable veterans, focussing on service personnel leaving the forces via military prison. Although the research is not representative, what became apparent is that for those individuals most at risk of social exclusion after discharge from the armed forces, “poor outcomes are interrelated and mutually reinforcing and affect not only the individual but society as a whole”. The research concluded that there was a need to integrate resettlement, rather than focus on individual outcomes, and highlighted that mental health and accommodation were areas where resources and research needed to be focussed. This research highlights that finding accommodation and risks of housing exclusion are significant issues for this group, and this links to wider social exclusion.

Research undertaken in the United States (US), to help to design a new homelessness service system, was a direct response to Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s announcement on the 21 December 2006 regarding his plan to end homelessness of veterans in New York over a five year period (Henderson *et al*, 2008: 4). The study identified that the veteran population was at a higher risk of homelessness for the following reasons: “multiple or extended deployments, substance abuse, unemployment and traumatic brain injury”. A significant impact on the homeless services is anticipated in the US (because of current and recent conflicts), although it has not yet been quantified (Henderson *et al*, 2008: 8). Most of the literature on veterans emanates from the US. However, this US research has to be treated with caution because the US does not have a welfare state, whilst the UK does. Although the US

has a well developed veteran support system, this support is conditional on length of service and honourable discharge from the US armed forces. This disparity in comparison between the US and the UK's research is demonstrated in a study into post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) rates after deployment in Iraq. The US studies showed higher rates of PTSD compared to the UK, which could be attributed to greater variability in the study design, longer deployment for US troops, combat exposure or lack of a welfare services in the US (Fear *et al*, 2010). This highlights that policy transfer based on comparative research can be problematic.

Homelessness of veterans is sometimes attributed to them being institutionalised through their employment in the armed forces. Johnsen *et al* (2008) highlight, that Army veterans are more likely to experience homelessness than their RAF or Navy counterparts. If institutionalisation was the reason for homelessness, it might be expected that the Navy and RAF veterans would experience comparable rates of homelessness to the Army veterans.

Higate (1997: 120) argues that the concept of institutionalisation “has been loosely applied and under-theorised” and “almost always used negatively”. Institutionalisation is defined as “to become accustomed to living in an institution, so as to lose self-reliance” (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989). It would appear that attributing homelessness of veterans to their

institutionalisation is too positivist an explanation, in that it denies the existence of personal agency and other structural constraints.

Johnsen *et al* (2008: 55) highlights that those that have spent the longest in the armed forces transition more easily into civilian life than those that have spent only a short time in the armed forces. In contrast, Ravenhill (2008: 138) states that “the longer a person is in an institutional setting, the deeper and more permanent the impact of institutionalisation becomes. Leaving the institution may destabilize their ontological security and trigger depression, mental health problems or substance abuse”. Ravenhill discusses the everyday norms of institutional friendships occurring within institutions such as work place, pubs, clubs and societies. She argues that if a person has been within an institution for a long time, it can make it difficult to transcend different friendships (outside the institution) that may assist the individual when they are in a time of need. A key point for this study, identified by Ravenhill (2008: 194), is that people leaving the armed forces, prisons and other institutions may find that “withdrawal of this level of intense human contact appeared to cause distress, the onset of mental health problems (depression) and feelings of isolation and loneliness”. The research seems conflicting; it may be that those that have served longer are more personally and financially resilient, than those that have served a short time.

Ravenhill states that to understand the effects of institutionalisation, explanation is needed as to why an individual entered the institution, their

experience within the institution and the long term impact of it. Ravenhill identifies triggers for homelessness, listed in Figure 4.0.

**Figure 4.0: Triggers of homelessness before, during and after time spent in the armed forces**

Before entering the armed forces	In the armed forces	On leaving the armed forces
<p>Child abuse.</p> <p>Family breakdown.</p> <p>Parent not willing to accommodate.</p> <p>Traumatic event.</p> <p>Running away.</p> <p>Parent in armed forces (associated high level of home &amp; school moving).</p> <p>Frequent changes of address.</p>	<p>Traumatic life events.</p> <p>Institutional friendships.</p> <p>Frequent change of address.</p> <p>Unstable home life.</p> <p>Relationship breakdown.</p> <p>Bullying.</p>	<p>Weak, negative or no social networks.</p> <p>Leaving home at/before age 16.</p> <p>Frequent changes of address.</p> <p>Debt, rent arrears or eviction.</p> <p>Relationship breakdown or substance abuse.</p> <p>Inability to cope with everyday tasks.</p> <p>Onset of mental illness, own aggression/violence.</p>
[extracted from Ravenhill (2008: 140)]		

O'Brien (1993: 288, cited in Higate 1997: 110) discusses how the military environment is seen to an outsider; being characterised by strong discipline and the submission of individuality to the greater good of the 'military



machine'. However, this is not necessarily the experience for the individual service person; it is often the first time that they have felt a strong sense of belonging in the military family "that will nurture and respect them". Losing their military social networks means that veterans are more likely to report common mental disorders and PTSD, compared with those still serving (Hatch *et al*, 2013: 1). Ironically, joining the armed forces may be a way of providing personal stability. Whilst in the armed forces, problems for the individual are contained; housing is provided, so the risk of homelessness is removed and mental health and addiction problems will be controlled. Their time spent in the armed forces can contain their individual problems, but their service can also add homeless triggers to their biographies. Leaving the armed forces appears, for some, to set off a multitude of triggers that place them in a negative feedback loop contributing to them being at a higher risk of homelessness.

Higate (2000) examines another aspect of homelessness and veterans; the physical toughness of veterans, particularly those who have army experience "in which bodies are disposed to overcoming tough physical exigency". This, together with "masculinised ideology, fierce pride and independence", promotes a culture of self-reliance, i.e. "standing on one's own two feet" (Higate, 2000: 106). This fierce pride may inhibit the veteran from seeking assistance. Essentially, they see themselves as independent and strong; to become homeless, and therefore vulnerable and dependent on social services,

would impinge on their strongly embedded identity of physical prowess, pride and independence.

There is substantial research into the link between alcoholism and homelessness. Equally, there has been a reasonable amount published on the fact that excessive drinking may predispose veterans to homelessness, although less through drug abuse (Higate, 2000; Johnsen *et al*, 2008).

Research used to assist the design of a new homeless service for veterans in New York identified “that about half of all homeless veterans suffer from mental illness and more than two-thirds suffer from alcohol or drug use problems” (Henderson *et al*, 2008:4).

In the UK, Johnsen *et al*'s (2008: 81) findings suggest that veterans have very similar characteristics and experiences to other homeless groups on the whole. However, they tend to be exclusively male, mostly from white ethnic background, older and a small number attribute vulnerability due to combat related PTSD. Homeless veterans are more likely to have alcohol and physical or mental health problems than the general homeless population.

Most Veterans identified their alcoholism with the culture of drinking in the armed forces (Johnsen *et al*, 2008: 31). The need for a release from the anxiety of military life often expresses itself in accepted male-orientated excessive drinking; an example being the “pressures of a tough field exercise often finds legitimised outlet in drinking binges” (Higate, 1997: 115). In an article for the Lancet, Fear *et al* (2010) argued that there was not “an

epidemic of mental health problems” in those that had been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. However, the research highlighted that armed forces personnel are at risk of “hazardous drinking, both before and after deployment and this continues to be a serious problem for regular service men and women” (Fear *et al*, 2010: 1666).

These types of findings provide evidence that could indicate that when this group require housing, some are likely to require support to both access and maintain a tenancy. Housing support is about helping people live independently in the community. It is aimed at meeting the specific needs of the individual, and can range from high to low level support. This can include “assistance to claim welfare benefits, fill in forms, manage a household budget, keep safe and secure, get help from other specialist services, obtain furniture and furnishings and help with shopping and housework” (Scottish Government, 2012e).

### **Meeting the housing needs for veterans**

This part of the chapter will discuss specific housing issues relating to veterans. Prior to, and after, leaving the armed forces, personnel can access housing through both the public and private sectors. Private sector housing includes private renting through private landlords or by purchasing a home on the open market. As discussed, there has been a substantial growth in the private rented sector; however those housed in this sector have fewer statutory rights than those residing in social housing. This research is largely

based on the provision of social housing. This is because access to mortgage funds has been restricted, and buying a house requires a substantial deposit and permanent reasonably paid employment. When personnel leave the armed forces, many do not have this type of financial security, especially those who have spent a short period of time in the armed forces. This research focuses on those who find it most challenging when they leave the armed forces, i.e. those who are less secure; therefore social housing is potentially an important option for this group.

Current Scottish Government housing guidance for organisations allocating social housing is that “you should give applications from ex-service personnel fair and sympathetic consideration. You should give ex-service personnel the same priority for housing as those with a similar level of housing need” (Scottish Government, 2011a). However, over the period of this study there has been an increase in organisations (LAs & RSLs) deciding to prioritise this group, despite there being no statutory obligation to do so. In response to this bottom-up policy response, the Scottish Government (2013a) has produced a practice guide for social housing providers with examples of housing allocation policies prioritising ex-service personnel in Scotland. The Scottish Government provides housing advice specifically for those about to leave the armed forces (Scottish Government, 2011a). In England, the application of the Military Covenant has placed a requirement on local authorities to frame their housing allocation policies, and to give additional

preferences to members of the armed forces' community who have urgent housing needs (MoD, 2012c).

**Figure 4.1: British Legion image**



[Sourced from Google (2013)]

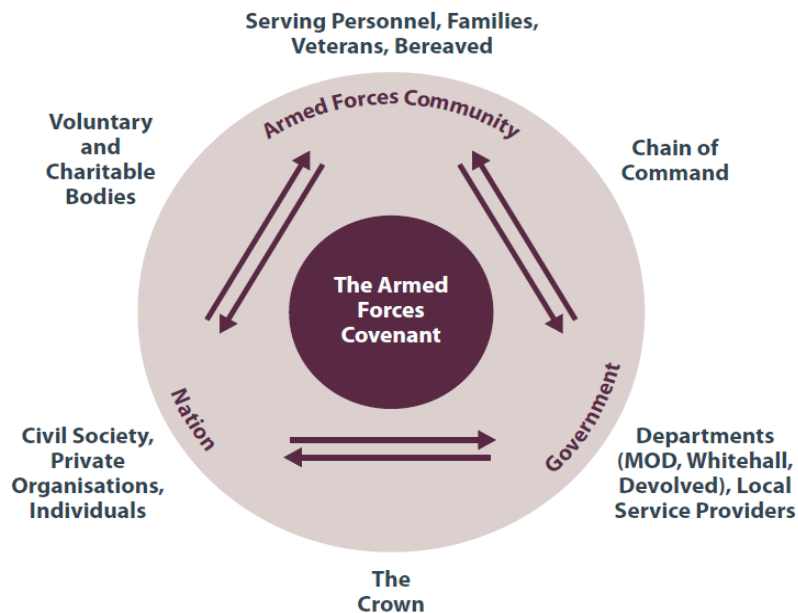
The Armed Forces Act 2011 (part 16a) brought the Military Covenant into law. It placed a statutory obligation on the Secretary of State to prepare and present an annual report to Parliament, reviewing the progress of the Military Covenant (legislation.gov.uk, 2013). It reports on the effect that membership and former membership of the armed forces has on a number of different fields, including healthcare, education and housing and other areas that the Secretary of State may determine (legislation.gov.uk, 2013). “In preparing the report, the Secretary of State must have regard in particular to:

- the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the armed forces;

- the principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantage arising for service people from membership, or former membership of the armed forces; and

- the principle that special provision for service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the armed forces” (legislation.gov.uk, 2013).

**Figure 4.2: The Armed Forces Covenant**



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[Source: Army Families Federation (2013)]

The ethos of the Military Covenant is that those that have served in the armed forces should not be disadvantaged because of their military service and that it is a responsibility of the whole of society to deliver the Covenant (see Figure 4.2), not just government (MoD, 2012c). Strachan (2009) sees it as challenging to measure equality of provision. He argues that the armed forces' contract of unlimited liability to the state, has meant that campaigns for the Military Covenant "carried an implicit aspiration that the services and their families should get not just equality of treatment with civilians, but more than that, at the very least the best that the state can provide" (Strachan, 2009). Walters (2012: 29) argues that the Covenant ought to reflect that the military deserve fair rather than privileged treatment. He points out that by making the Covenant a statutory obligation, it could mean

that when expectations are not met, it results in a sense of betrayal and breakdown of trust, thus threatening the very foundations of the Military Covenant. Walters (2012: 32) sees the Covenant making the most enduring difference by creating an “awareness of key areas of concern and a means to measure the actions, results and policies of Government”.

The first formal annual report was delivered in 2012 (Government, 2012). The report highlighted some of the key achievements of the Covenant, including school class sizes being extended to accommodate service children, three guaranteed IVF treatments for seriously injured service personnel and keeping armed forces’ compensation scheme payments free from being means-tested for social care purposes. In terms of health, the IVF treatments are an example where a clear connection can be made between damage to reproductive health caused by military service. In education, a clear link can be made between service children having to move school regularly, therefore potentially damaging their education because of their parents’ employment in the armed forces. For housing, it is less clear compared to the education and health examples, in determining a causal link between a person’s service in the armed forces and their lack of housing. This links to the discussion in the introductory chapter regarding housing being an immovable and expensive resource compared to health and education, and the confusion about housing being a social right or a commodity. Even if a definitive link could be made between the lack of housing and armed forces’ service, the resources are not available to provide enough social housing to meet the housing needs of both



the civilian and ex-military community. So far, the progress of the Military Covenant reports on the provision of health and education; these outcomes are relatively easily achieved compared to the provision of housing. Hence housing could be described as the ‘wobbly pillar’ of the Military Covenant.

The Military Covenant is a policy that the government wish to pursue. Deacon (2007: 4) defines social policy as being “understood as those mechanisms, policies and procedures used by governments, working with other actors, to alter the distributive and social outcomes of economic activity”. This definition of social policy links actors working in partnership with policies and procedures and this fits within the broader concept of governance. Hill (2005: 179) states “policies as defined as stances may be relatively clear-cut, political commitments to specific action. The difficulty is that they are made much more complex as they are translated into action”. Parliament may pass legislation that local government is expected to deliver, but crucially sufficient resources are not always provided, which effectively makes the legislation undeliverable. Politicians or ‘policy-makers’ are often distant from the implementation phase, and this effectively shelters them from the fall-out criticism of unpopular policies (Hill, 2005). Implement deficit can develop due to a lack of “inter-organisational integration, inadequate funding of the programme and poor training of front-line staff” (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973, cited in Lowe 2004: 29). Bochel & Duncan (2007: 3) add that policy formulation is rarely straightforward, and is complicated by a range of different actors who have different aims and objectives. Lowe

(2004: 2) concludes that “it is almost a law of policy analysis that intention and outcomes rarely equate”. This brief discussion on social policy is relevant to the provision of social housing and the Military Covenant because it provides an explanation of state intentions and interventions, and a reminder of why policy, as an instrument of governance, can fail.

### **Social Housing Provision**

This section considers the broader provision of social housing and links with the previous discussion on social policy. The governance narrative (in the last thirty years) is reflected in the provision of social housing, with a decrease in housing stock owned by local authorities and an increase in RSLs providing housing in the ‘not for profit sector’. During this period, the transfer of social housing from public to social landlords in Scotland took place (Taylor, 2004: 132). In the mid 1990s local authorities owned 90% of the social sector stock; by March 2012, this had reduced to 54% (Scottish Government, 2013b). There has also been a significant reduction in social housing during this period of time because of the ‘right to buy’ policy.

There are just under 600,000 social rented properties (owned by local authorities and RSLs) in Scotland. Approximately nine percent of these properties become available each year, making turnover in this sector relatively low (Scottish Parliament, 2012). Within this sector, up to 80% of tenants are in receipt of full or partial housing benefit (Scottish Government, 2012c). The social housing sector has been described as being residualised,

i.e. providing housing for those with little market choice. This concentration of people on low incomes in social housing has also been attributed to allocations policies that prioritise those considered to be in priority need. Allocation policies are generally based on needs-based point systems. Some landlords operate Common Housing Registers (CHRs). CHRs introduce a single application process between landlords, reducing the number of applications a person has to fill in to be housed in one area (Scottish Executive, 2006).

Social housing providers have discretion to develop their own housing policies, but they have to fulfil certain legal obligations. Allocation lists are legislated for through the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. The 1987 Act identifies groups that should be given ‘reasonable preference’ and these include persons who are:

“occupying houses which do not meet the tolerable standard; or  
occupying overcrowded houses; or  
have large families; or  
living under unsatisfactory housing conditions; and  
homeless persons and persons threatened with homelessness” (Scottish Parliament, 2012).

Such preferences appear straightforward, however, this is set against the challenge of scarce social housing, competing demand groups and at a time when rights for homeless households have increased. Providing housing is

about more than meeting a homeless requirement. It is also about meeting many competing needs in an environment where social housing resources are expensive, scarce and immovable.

Homelessness legislation in Scotland (Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003) “granted Scottish Ministers powers to bring forward secondary legislation (The Homelessness (Abolition of Priority Need) (Scotland) Order 2012) to end the use of the priority need test” (Scottish Government, 2012d). Priority need gave certain groups of people higher priority for social housing, if they were considered vulnerable. This meant abolishing the priority need category by the 31 December 2012, when “all people facing homelessness through no fault of their own will have a right to settled accommodation” (Scottish Government, 2012b). The majority of homeless households then became entitled to temporary accommodation until settled accommodation could be found. The minority being those that had been evicted from social housing through rent arrears or anti-social behaviour, but those households are entitled to advice and temporary accommodation from local authorities.

Scotland’s homelessness policies have been described as the most progressive homelessness legislation in Europe, in that the safety net has been widened aiming to virtually end homelessness in Scotland by 2012 (Anderson, 2009). However, this widening of the safety net, at a time when house building is at an all time low, means that service users spend longer in temporary accommodation. For example, a single person in the Stirling Council area

now has to wait two and a half years in temporary accommodation.

Previously, it was nearer to two years (Inside Housing, 2012).

There has been a shift towards preventive measures such as housing options, which involves the local authority providing housing advice with an early intervention approach. Housing options aims to prevent homelessness by considering the wider options for clients, such as the private rented sector or low cost home ownership; if this proves unsuccessful, clients are accepted under statutory homelessness legislation (Glasgow Homelessness Network, 2013; Shelter, 2011). In some ways it has amalgamated the traditional separate housing/homeless waiting lists. Also, it has reduced statutory homeless numbers (those that have been accepted by the local authority as 'duty to settled accommodation') but has raised concerns that some local authorities may use gatekeeping methods to actively prevent presentations being recorded as statutory homeless (Fitzpatrick *et al*, 2012).

The UK Welfare Act 2012 introduced some significant changes to the welfare system, with the gradual introduction of universal credit commencing in 2013. This benefit was designed to help welfare recipients to move back into work, simplify the system and combine a number of different benefits, with the intention of bringing down the overall cost of welfare spending (gov.UK, 2012). Housing benefit will no longer be paid separately and directly to the social landlord, rather it will be paid to the recipient under the umbrella benefit, universal credit. This raises fears that some social housing tenants

will choose not to pay their rent and evictions will rise, putting further pressure on homelessness services. Additionally, those social housing tenants who have spare bedrooms will have their housing benefit reduced to reflect the number of bedrooms they require. The Scottish Government (2013) sees these changes to housing benefit as restricting recipients' ability to meet their housing costs, which could lead to increased evictions and therefore undermining the ambitions for homelessness legislation.

## CONCLUSION

After leaving the armed forces, some veterans experience multiple and negatively reinforcing problems that place them at greater risk of homelessness. The general profile of veterans that are most likely to experience homelessness is those that have spent a short period of time in the armed forces. Army veterans are at increased risk of homelessness compared to their RAF or Navy counterparts, and this is related to their social-economic status and education prior to enlistment. Military service may not have made these individuals vulnerable; rather it may have postponed it. The explanations given for their homelessness includes alcoholism, triggers from childhood, family break-downs and institutionalisation.

Some commentators suggest institutionalisation places veterans at greater risk of homelessness. This chapter considers institutionalisation as being under conceptualised, and that it does not provide a complete explanation. Veterans are more likely to report mental health problems than those that are still serving. Therefore, the breaking of the institutional social networks may provide a better explanation as to why some find it difficult to transition into civilian life. These specific circumstances of veterans may mean that general housing solutions may not be adequate for this group, and they may require specialist housing support to access and maintain a tenancy. In theory, the broadening of the homelessness safety net means that veterans should not be homeless in Scotland. The media highlight stories about

military ‘heroes’ languishing at the bottom of social housing waiting lists, with little discussion on the length of social housing waiting lists and that legislation in Scotland does not prioritise this group over those with a similar housing need. In contrast, as a direct result of the Military Covenant, local authorities in England are required to frame their housing allocation policies to give additional preference to members of the armed forces’ community who have urgent housing needs. The ethos of the Military Covenant is that armed forces personnel should not be disadvantaged because of their military service, and whilst health and education disadvantages are easily identifiable and easier to solve, housing is less so. This relates back to housing being the wobbly pillar of the welfare state and the provision of housing being through both the private and public sector, with the private sector being more involved in the provision of housing than health and education. The Military Covenant has capability, but cannot fulfil government policy intentions because of the very nature of housing, i.e. a scarce, expensive and immovable resource.

The literature on military veterans focuses on homelessness; this study will illuminate the broader accessibility issues of housing provision. It will do this by gathering data to gain an organisational perspective and an online survey to gain a veteran’s perspective. Therefore the third research question is: How do organisations operate in the area of policy and practice to house military veterans?



The next section of this thesis will present the research methodology used to collect data to answer the research questions.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

The last chapter focused on military veterans, perhaps giving the expectation that the study was exclusively about military veterans. Rather, it is about governance and collaborative working within networks using military veterans as a lens for exploration. Indeed, this study could be about any group that may have difficulty accessing housing, but military veterans are a unique, high profile, complex and topical group to study. The methodology is therefore focused on obtaining an organisational perspective on partnership working to house military veterans. An online survey of veterans is also used to obtain a service users' perspective, and this is discussed later in this chapter.

This chapter describes the aims and objectives of the study, and relates this to the theoretical and methodological approach and study design. It includes a justification of why the methods were chosen to answer the research questions. This is followed by a discussion on interviewing, analysis process, research validity and ethical issues. It includes the researcher's thoughts and reflection on their personal impact on the data collection, the process, the effectiveness and efficacy of the methods chosen. The chapter closes with a brief set of conclusions.

## Theoretical framework

This study focused on producing empirical research framed by theories of governance, networks and partnership working discussed in Chapters Two and Three. Contemporary exponents of social theory “develop a theoretical frame of reference that facilitates the understanding of the distinctiveness and problems of modern contemporary society” (Baert & Carreira da Silva, 2010: 3). Governance theory allows a greater understanding of organisational structures, power and relationships between actors and how this impacts on them collaborating to provide services. Governance theory provides a broad level understanding of how state control impacts on organisational collaboration and partnership working, illuminating areas to study in practice.

A case study approach was taken and an online survey was employed to collect empirical evidence, to answer the research proposition ‘To what extent do organisations work together to provide housing services for military veterans in Scotland?’ It explores how public and third sector organisations collaborate in this area of practice. Whilst the research proposition identifies what the research is about, it does not describe what is being studied. Therefore the following research questions are used to provide the study with direction:

1. Question one “how do the case study organisations ‘fit’ a governance perspective?”

2. Question two “what is the nature of collaboration between organisations to meet the housing needs of military veterans in Scotland?”
3. Question three “how do the case study organisations operate in the area of policy and practice to house military veterans in Scotland?”

The first question, in adopting Stoker’s (1998: 18) ‘governance as theory’ (see Figure 5.0), explores the five propositions as an explanatory theoretical framework. It guided and facilitated the research question, case study protocol and data analysis.

**Figure 5.0: Stoker’s (1998) five propositions:**

1. “Governance refers to a set of institutions and actors that are drawn from but also beyond government.”
2. “Governance identifies the blurring of boundaries and responsibilities for tackling social and economic issues.”
3. “Governance identifies the power dependence involved in the relationships between institutions involved in collective action.”
4. “Governance is about autonomous self-governing networks or actors.”
5. “Governance recognizes the capacity to get things done which does not rest on the power of government to command or use its authority.”

Kaehne (2012) makes the link between partnerships, governance and policy, and sees the importance of partnerships in the analysis of policy and governance. Therefore, the second question explores the extent and practice of partnerships/collaborative working by considering the enablers and barriers to this activity. Hudson & Hardy's (2002: 53) six principles of successful partnerships (see Figure 3.0) and Hudson & Hardy's (2002: 54) five categories of barriers to coordination (see Figure 3.1) provided a focus for framing question two. Hudson & Hardy's (2002) frameworks are lower level theories, giving a practical perspective on organisational collaboration.

In common with Stoker's governance theory and Hudson & Hardy's theory on cooperation, is the notion of organisational boundaries and networks.

Chapter Three discussed boundary spanners and this concept offers an explanation for the role of actors spanning organisational boundaries to collaborate with others. Stoker's theoretical framework was applied to collect and analyse the data to answer question one. Questions two and three were guided by the theoretical frameworks but were not so systematically applied as in question one, allowing concepts to develop from the data and this will be discussed later in the chapter.

The third question examines the problems associated with accessing housing under the governance perspective (particularly in the area of social housing) for military veterans. An online survey of military veterans, who had left the

armed forces in the last ten years and settled in Scotland, provides service users' perspectives on their actual experiences of accessing housing services. This contributes to the overall aim of this research as it was important not only to obtain practitioners' opinions of organisational collaboration but also to determine how service users' experienced this type of service delivery and how organisations worked together to meet their housing needs.

The main method of data collection was from case studies of service providing organisations, which will be discussed later in the chapter. The following section considers the methodological approach.

### **Methodological approach**

The foundations of any research process and justification for choice of methodology and methods are based on assumptions about our perspective of reality. Crotty (1998: 2) states that "to ask about these assumptions is to ask about our theoretical perspective". Ontology is based on the nature of existence and reality, whilst epistemology is related to "what is the relationship between the inquirer and the known" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008: 31); in other words, the researcher's relationship with reality. The researcher's epistemological, ontological and methodological stance can be termed as a paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008: 31).

Denzin & Lincoln (2008: 31) argue that all research is interpretive in that it is guided by the researcher's beliefs and understanding of the world and how it

should be studied. Within the interpretive paradigm, Denzin & Lincoln (2008: 31) discuss four sub paradigms that structure qualitative research. The one that most fits this study is constructivist epistemology. Constructivist or social construction, as explained by Creswell (2014: 8), asserts that individuals seek their own understanding of the world that they live and work in, and in so doing they develop meanings and these are multiple. This view also acknowledges that the researcher's background affects the way they shape and interpret meaning and interaction with research participants. With this stance "there is not true or valid interpretation" (Crotty, 1998: 47-48), even given that these interpretations can be "useful, liberating, fulfilling, and rewarding". Crotty (1998) describes how institutions precede us and it is only by inhabiting or being inhabited by them that we view the public and conventional sense they make; as such we use interpretive strategies to construct meaning of these institutions. In essence, constructivism "describes the individual human subject engaging with objects in the world and making sense of them" (Crotty, 1998: 79).

In this study the participants are interpreting and constructing meaning as individuals within the case study organisations; thus providing multiple interpretations that again cannot be seen as completely true or valid because their interpretation is based on their life experiences and interaction with institutions. However, these multiple interpretations, although subjective, are important as lived experiences are internalised and arise from the

external world. This position is useful as it tells us much about ‘reality’, which is the social conditions from which it arose.

A constructivism (or interpretivist) perspective adopts a relativist ontology, with the assumption that an individual constructs knowledge throughout their life through their lived experiences and interaction with society (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2013). Within this paradigm the methodology is described as hermeneutic and dialectic, i.e. “individual constructions are elicited and refined hermeneutically, and compared and contrasted dialectically, with the aim of generating one or a few constructions on which there is substantial consensus” (Guba, 1990: 27). In other words, the researcher collects data, which is then interpreted, contradictions are sought and findings are debated and contextualised. This interpretive perspective fits with the use of case studies as the method of data collection. The case study offers a method to obtain an in-depth understanding of a real-life contemporary phenomenon by using different sources of evidence and comparing and contrasting differences between cases. This research strategy uses triangulation, not to claim objective reality but to add rigor, breadth, complexity, richness and depth to an inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008: 7).

Stake (2008: 129) states that qualitative casework can be typified as “data sometimes pre-coded but continuously interpreted, on first encounter again and again”. He discusses how the brainwork of qualitative casework is largely observational, but more critically it is reflective, or as he would rather call it, interpretive. Whilst the theories discussed in the literature review informed



the direction of this research, themes were allowed to emerge from the data in an inductive approach, based on the researcher's interpretations of subjective meanings gathered from the data. It is recognised that the evidence collected within the case studies is based on the interaction between the researcher and the participant, with both parties' understanding of the exchange or meanings offered being coloured by a person's background, and that interpretation is based on historical, cultural and personal experiences.

Overall, the research method for this study is largely interpretive, with the use of qualitative methods, and some use of quantitative methods.

Qualitative methods are ideally suited to studying phenomena such as governance, providing explanation and understanding contexts. Bryne (2011: 31) discusses the complexity of governance and networks to demonstrate that these systems are constantly in change, and put simply "stability of governance systems seems to be the exception rather than the rule". Therefore, measuring the complexity of governance cannot be achieved by quantitative replication alone; it requires narrative.

This research is about understanding the non-linear 'messy' development of governance, networks, partnership working and practice in the provision of public services. Crucial to this study is the perspective of those involved in delivering these services, their interpretation of realism and my understanding of what they tell me. From this I construct meaning through

an interpretive lens based on my beliefs and my perception of reality. My own perception of reality had been framed through my experience of being employed by the MoD in a care and housing setting in the past, being part of the veterans' wider community and working in this area of practice. I am aware, as a researcher, that this background could influence my interpretation. Nevertheless, through the application of reflective practice, I have attempted to seek a more general perspective whilst being mindful that my background can prejudice my objectivity. However, I acknowledge that this research cannot be completely objective because I am not viewing the world at a distance, neither am I an impartial observer. An attempt is made to mitigate practitioner impartiality and is discussed later in this chapter in the research validity section.

Bryne (2011: 31) discusses how research can benefit from using both quantitative and qualitative methods and that they cannot be divorced from each other. Equally, Robson (2011: 166) states "corroboration between quantitative and qualitative data enhances the validity of findings" and provides a more comprehensive picture. Although, Robson (2011: 163) discusses the incompatibility between quantitative and qualitative methods, as they do not study the same phenomena, he sees research methods as being about more than a one-way relationship. Robson (2011: 166) highlights that most studies do not provide integrated findings between the quantitative and qualitative components, and this is likely to be the case in this research, with the majority of the findings being from qualitative methods.

Nonetheless, the online survey was an important supplement to the qualitative case studies. The decision was taken not to include veterans in the case study data collection because they can be a difficult-to-reach population and it had been hard to recruit veterans onto a previous study. When veterans had been recruited, they had wanted to talk about their personal life experiences, which would ideally suit an ethnographic study but not the collection of data on organisational collaboration. What the online survey allowed was the opportunity to obtain a larger sample size of veterans and a focused perspective of their interaction with service providers.

The online quantitative data of veterans was based on their housing experiences and their perception of the extent of collaboration between organisations to meet their housing need in the last ten years. Whilst the qualitative data collected from interviews with practitioners took place in the summer of 2012, the practitioners' data is unlikely to have been based on their experiences over the past ten years because emphasis on housing military veterans is fairly new. Nonetheless, it is valuable to obtain a service user's perspective for this study as it is important to find out how this type of service provision affects them. A ten-year parameter was set to enable greater participation and increase the sample size in the online survey.

The research design of this study, to a certain extent, is therefore a mixed methods multi-strategy approach, although it largely adopts qualitative methods within a case study frame.

### **The case study approach**

This part of the chapter will firstly consider the case studies and the online survey will be discussed later. A case study can be based on many different examples and these can include an individual, an organisation, a country or a political system.

“A case study is a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence” (Yin, 2009: 18).

For this research, case studies were used to study four individual organisations. A case study is described by Gillham (2000: 1) as a study that answers a research question that “seeks a range of different kinds of evidence, evidence which is there in the case setting, and which has to be abstracted and collated to get the best possible answers to the research questions”.

“The case study as a research strategy comprises an all-encompassing method - covering the logic of design, data collection techniques, and specific approaches to data analysis. In this sense, the case study is

not either a data collection tactic or merely a design feature alone but a comprehensive research strategy” (Yin, 2003: 14).

A key characteristic of the case study is to draw on multiple sources of evidence and multiple methods which can be used within it. They can include interviews, documentary analysis, archival records, physical artefacts and direct and observation participation (Yin, 2003). Yin (2003: 1) states that case studies are important when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are posed and particularly to investigate reality and phenomenon. Within this study, the phenomenon is the contemporary support for military veterans, and the context is housing services, and how the organisations work together to provide these services. The research is therefore about looking at ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions. For example, how working in collaboration or within networks is seen, or not seen, by those involved as improving service delivery; or why organisations and participants see the need to work with others and how these networks operate in practice. Both these are important ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions in this study.

Yin (2009: 53) discusses how “a major insight is to consider multiple cases as one would consider multiple experiments that is, to follow a replication design”. This study applies the multiple experiments to all four case studies; the distinction that makes this study a multiple case design instead of a single case study is that the data are not pooled across all of the organisations to become one part of a larger unit of analysis (Yin, 2009: 60). The multiple

case study design used in this research is considered to be more rigorous than a single case study (Yin, 2009: 53). The data is used to compare and contrast findings with independent conclusions for each case study, and contribute to the whole study.

It is not the intention of the research to generalise the findings from the case studies to the wider population, rather to study the phenomena in depth from many different angles and to build on theories of governance. Figure 5.1 illustrates the different methods employed within a case study, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of this type of study.

**Figure 5.1: Advantages and disadvantages of methods used within a case study**

Method	Description	Advantage	Disadvantage
Interviews	A format that asks questions.	Flexible and adaptable way of gaining evidence. Face-to-face interviews enable the interpretation of non-verbal responses and following up interesting responses.	Lack of standardisation can produce bias. Interviews can take a long time, as does transcription, coding and analysis of complex data.
Observation	The researcher describes analyses and interprets observations.	Directness, what people do is observed, it gives real life reviews.	Time consuming; people may change their behaviour when being observed.
Participant observation	The observer seeks to become a member of the group.	The researcher becomes involved in the operational and real life experiences of the research.	As above. Plus the researcher has to remain reflexive and aware of their own personal bias.
Document analysis	These can include written documents and website material.	Contains exact information not created for the purpose of the case study.	Bias possible due to the author's interpretation. Access maybe restricted through gatekeeper. Data selected may be incomplete.
Archival analysis	These can include client records, organisation records, survey data and personal details.	Same as above.	Same as above. May have data protection access issues.
[Data sourced from Robson (2011) and Yin (2003)]			

## **Rationale for case study selection**

Four case studies of organisations that typify housing services were selected; these included a military advice centre, a military charity that provides housing, a local authority and a registered social landlord. Other important criteria included geographical location in Scotland, whether the organisation was from the public or third sector and the different type of housing services provided. At a macro level, the case studies were selected because they represent the sector's organisational diversity. These different types of organisations represent both generic and bespoke providers, and this means that they provide housing services/advice in different ways. They represent the diverse range of organisations available to military veterans; in essence, it is what the veteran has to engage or negotiate with in order to find a home. It should also illustrate the complexity of networks, and different types of 'institutions and actors that are drawn from but also beyond government' (Stoker, 1998: 19) to meet the aim of the study on how organisations work together. As discussed in the introduction, these organisations were geographically dispersed, therefore did not work together. Rather, the emphasis on selection was about how they worked with similar organisations in the operational spheres.

The organisational selection at the micro level emerged from detailed consideration of specific contexts, drawing on information available in relation to key issues that were considered innovative or of interest in



relation to veterans. For example, the military advice agency was chosen because it was a relatively new and unique organisation (established in 2010), which had very quickly discovered that 60% of their referrals were related to access to housing issues. In contrast, the military charity was a long established organisation that was evolving to meet the changing needs of their service users. At the time of selection, the local authority had just adopted the Armed Forces Community Covenant and the area was expected to be disproportionately affected by the intention to double or even treble the army numbers in Scotland in the next five years (HM Forces, 2011). The reason for this possible increase in numbers, at a time when the armed forces are being reduced, is that all military bases in Germany are due to close by 2020 and those returning will require housing. The RSL was selected because it had decided to prioritise veterans in its housing allocation policy by uniquely developing a quota system. Accessibility was crucial to the selection process; this was achieved relatively easily as some organisations wanted to publicise what they were doing, and others had recently changed their allocation policies to prioritise veterans and were keen to assess what was happening. Fieldwork also coincided with the issue of supporting military veterans being high on the political agenda.

The MoD resettlement services were approached early on to negotiate access to carry out a case study. This resulted in contact being made with an individual within the MoD at Whitehall in London. Although initial correspondence was very positive, once a formal request was made to

interview resettlement officers (who provide housing advice for those about to leave the armed forces) the communication ended. This may have been because at the time redundancies were being made throughout the MoD. Networking prior to fieldwork provided access to military personnel, but again, after initial contact was made, requests for access failed to materialise. During the fieldwork, contact was made with a senior member of the military (who worked with the advice agency). He sought authorisation at higher level within the MoD so that an interview could be conducted and authorisation was granted. Unfortunately, one month prior to the scheduled interview this individual was made redundant from the MoD and no longer had the time to participate in the research. Contact was also made with the ethics committee for the MoD, and whilst they were helpful, they made it quite clear that in their opinion it was very difficult for anyone outside the MoD to obtain ethical clearance to do research within the MoD. This was disappointing; the decision was then made to move on with the research without MoD involvement at any level. Contacts to gain access were exhausted; perhaps other contacts could have been pursued, but doing that would have had the potential to impact negatively on the pace of the study, and access was still likely to have been denied. To mitigate non-access to MoD resettlement services, documentary analysis of their website took place.

On reflection, the selection process could have been conducted with greater scientific rigour if organisations in Scotland had been selected randomly. However, this was a study of how organisations worked together; therefore,

geographical considerations could have constrained random selection. For example, a small rural housing provider may have very limited housing stock and staff within the organisation, reducing the capacity to work with others and therefore constraining its ability to answer the 'how' and 'why' questions of this research. Equally, it was never the intention of the study to generalise the results to the whole of Scotland. Nevertheless, the RSL and the local authority housing providers selected are in areas that are geographically diverse and both organisations manage a significant housing stock. The RSL has 10,000+ units and the local authority has 30,000+ units; this represents approximately 8% of the total social housing in Scotland. The next part of this chapter provides a synopsis of the case study organisations.

### **The case study organisations**

#### **Case Study Organisation 1 - The Advice Agency**

The advice agency was set up in 2010 as a city council funded initiative. The council identified that some veterans were vulnerable; it then assessed what was provided for this group and decided that it could do more to help veterans in its locality. Instead of providing the service directly, it decided to approach a military charity to provide the service. This case study organisation is the only organisation in this study that does not directly provide housing, rather it provides housing advice.

In response to over 60% of clients at the advice agency presenting with problems relating to accessing housing, the lack of housing expertise was

quickly identified as a key weakness of the service. Subsequently, a senior policy officer was seconded from a large housing association and this dramatically improved housing outcomes for clients.

The overall objective of the advice agency is to provide a service that is a focus and gateway for anyone leaving the armed forces and settling in the locality. This service provides information and advice on housing, employment, debt, health and any other issues that service users may have when settling in the area. Essentially, it has developed into a 'one-stop-shop', limiting the amount of organisations that the veteran has to find and engage with to access services. This organisation is unique within this case study research because it does not directly provide housing or accommodation for military veterans. The advice agency is set up to work with a wide range of partners, refer service users to the right agencies and to engage with the different providers on behalf of veterans.

### **Case Study Organisation 2 - The Charity**

The charity is one of the oldest military charities in Scotland, founded in 1910 to support veterans and their spouses who find themselves in times of need. Operating in two cities, it provides supported accommodation for 127 residents in en-suite rooms with meals provided, together with 21 independent living flats. The charity is also developing accommodation in a third city.

In the past, it was mainly older veterans who were accommodated by the charity, and for some this became their permanent home. The charity is now evolving to meet the needs and demands of younger veterans who are presenting with “psychological issues that we never would have dealt with before” (participant charity/1). Additionally, these younger veterans require housing support in the transitional period from living at the accommodation to moving into their own tenancies. To meet this demand, the charity works with councils and RSLs. A housing charity also identified military veterans as a vulnerable group and it provides a support worker located in one of the city residences. Two additional housing support officers have also been employed.

### **Case Study Organisation 3 - The Local Authority (LA)**

The LA is one of the largest providers of council housing in Scotland. It covers a wide geographical area and has 30,000 units, over 12,000 people on its waiting lists and an annual turnover of 2,000 properties (June 2012) (all figures are approximate). It has recently signed up to the Armed Forces Community Covenant and has developed an armed forces protocol. The protocol details policy and procedure guidance for the council’s housing and partner organisations.

As at July 2012, and in line with Scottish Government guidance, the LA gives no housing priority to veterans above any other groups with similar needs. It has produced an Armed Forces Housing Guide, detailing access to housing.

The LA has been working as part of the area's armed forces group, which is "a corporate approach and a partnership approach, to develop better access to services generally across the area for all armed forces personnel, both veterans returning and people who are leaving the forces". This partnership approach is primarily driven by the closure of an RAF base and the opening of a new army base at the location. It is proposed to house troops and their families at the vacant RAF base when the army bases in Germany close by 2020. This is likely to create new issues and an increased presence of armed forces in the area.

#### **Case study organisation 4 - The Registered Social Landlord (RSL)**

The RSL owns and maintains more than 10,200 properties and they are one of Scotland's largest RSLs. The stock of housing was transferred from the local council in 2003. The RSL has a high demand for properties and as at June 2012, had approximately 5,000 applicants on its waiting list (including those on the transfer list). The RSL covers a large rural geographical area, which presents unique problems for prospective tenants who may wish to live in rural areas but are unable to afford to live in these areas because of high travel costs.

The director of Housing Services became aware that some veterans had recently left the armed forces and were accommodated in temporary accommodation. The director considered this morally wrong, as these individuals had served their country and therefore they could at least expect

to be provided with a home. The director put forward a proposal to introduce a new category in their annual letting plans, namely providing 1% of their allocations for ex-armed forces applicants. This proposal was taken to committee at the RSL and to tenants; support for policy change was overwhelming.

This quota system, as at June 2012, was a unique housing allocation policy for veterans in Scotland. This RSL has also established a link on their website with information for veterans settling in the area and, in partnership with a charity, is providing work opportunities for veterans.

#### **Methods of data collection**

The case study was the main means of data organisation, see figure 5.2 for all collection methods used within the cases.

**Figure 5.2 Data Collection Methods**

<b>Data collection methods at the case study organisations</b>				
<b>Method</b>	<b>Advice Agency</b>	<b>Military Charity</b>	<b>Local Authority Housing Provider</b>	<b>RSL</b>
Semi-structured interviews	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observation	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

Participant observation	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Document analysis	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Archival analysis	No	No	No	No

The core method used to collect data within the case study was semi-structured interviews with specific questions to be answered. The topic guide was tested prior to the research, to ensure the questions made sense and were appropriately sequenced.

A semi-structured interview provides the researcher with a format (during interviews) which is not as restrictive as a structured questionnaire but still provides continuity, which in turn produces data that is easier to interpret and manage (Silverman, 2000). Additionally, it provides a level of flexibility to follow up interesting lines of enquiry that can provide rich data. However, this method has been criticised because of a lack of standardisation; this can produce bias (Robson, 2011: 281). To overcome this problem of bias the researcher had to maintain reflexivity and apply stringent systematic procedures. The researcher did this by systematically asking open questions at every interview and only providing additional input when requested.

Visits to organisations prior to data collection, helped the researcher to identify potential participants, both within the organisation and within other



institutions that the participants worked with. Face-to-face interviews were carried out at the individual organisations and institutions that they worked with; a variety of staff members, including chief executives, senior policy officers, project managers, managers, a councillor and front-line staff, were interviewed (see Figure 5.3 for list of participants). Participants identified other suitable people for interviewing. This snowballing sampling technique depends on those initially been selected identify others within their networks (Matthews & Ross, 2010). This method of selecting those to interview could be criticised for being an unscientific method of selecting participants i.e. it is not by random selection, however this method was considered reflective of the very nature of studying collaborative networks, it helped to provide willing participants that were relevant to the research.

**Figure 5.3: List of participants**

Individual participants interviewed (with identifiers) in case studies n=25. *The order of the participants is based on the order of the interviews.			
The Advice Agency	The Military Charity	The Local Authority Housing Provider	The RSL
*Senior Policy Officer  Advice Agency/1	Manager at city location  Charity/1	Lead Officer (Team Manager)  LA/1	Manager of a charity that works with the RSL to house veterans  RSL/1
Support Worker	Manager at city location	Team Leader	Chair of Customer Services Committee

Advice Agency/2	Charity/2	LA/2	RSL/2
Project manager  Advice Agency/3	Chief Executive  Charity/3	Temporary Accommodation Manager  LA/3	Lettings Team Manager  RSL/3
Service Development Manager at the City Council  Advice Agency/4	Support worker for organisation that works with the Charity  Charity/4	Senior Manager  LA/4	Director of Housing  RSL/4
Director of a HA that works with the Advice Agency  Advice Agency/5	A Housing Advice Officer from an RSL that works with the charity  Charity/5	Area Manager of a HA that works with the LA  LA/5	Councillor/Armed Forces Champion  RSL/5
Chairman of a SSAFA Branch  Advice Agency/6	Support Worker (Veterans Outreach of another charity)  Charity/6	Executive Director  LA/6	
	2 x Housing Officers from an RSL (city location) that		

	works with the charity Charity/7 Charity/8		
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The face-to-face interviews were recorded digitally, ensuring an accurate record of the discussion and allowing the researcher to focus on non-verbal signals and engage with the participant. A written explanation as to why the interviews were recorded was provided to participants within the consent form. The interviews were transcribed by a University of Stirling approved transcriber. A field diary was kept for the researcher to reflect on the non-verbal signals observed, conversations out with the interviews and how the researcher felt their participation impacted on the interview. In total, 25 semi-structured interviews were carried out, this was less than the anticipated 30+ interviews because the MoD case study did not materialise. Nevertheless, saturation of evidence was achieved; meaning that towards the end of the data collection phase there was a feeling of diminishing returns, in that there was a lack of new themes emerging.

Documentary evidence was largely accessed online in this study.

Documentation evidence is one method that is usually always used in case studies to corroborate evidence from other sources (Yin, 2009: 103). A review of the organisations' websites was made prior to visits, to access documents such as policy, practice or annual reviews. This meant that the researcher was visiting the organisations with some background knowledge,

i.e. with an understanding of the organisation's aims, objectives and background, what type of service it provided and key roles. Although gathering documentary evidence should be done systematically, this task was not always achieved as systematically as planned because different participants had different priorities, and some offered additional material whilst others did not. However, this did not impact unduly on the quality of the documentary evidence, as gaps in material could usually be filled from the individual organisation's website.

Direct participation involves observing events in the case setting, whilst participant observation means participating in the events. As a prelude to the fieldwork, the researcher networked within the veterans' organisations' community, through Veterans Scotland. Veterans Scotland is the prime focus for military charities working together throughout Scotland. The researcher was co-opted onto the Veterans Scotland group to help prepare a lottery bid to identify gaps in service provision for veterans. This charity was not used as a case study organisation, but this work enabled links to be made with others.

Robson (2011: 319) states, "a key feature of participant observation is that the observer seeks to become some kind of member of the observed group". He argues that whilst some would find this method unscientific and lacking subjectivity, the social world involves "subjective meanings and experiences constructed by participants in social situations". He claims that "objectivity can be approached through a heightened sensitivity to the problem of

subjectivity”. However, one of the disadvantages of this type of research is that if one goes ‘native’ it risks objectivity. This narrative description cannot provide a complete explanation for the complexity of this role. However, participation observation was not part of any data collection, it was just part of a prelude to identify and gain access to organisations and participants to interview. This strategy was successful in that it improved my awareness of the organisations directly involved in providing services to military veterans, thus helping to select case studies. Additionally, the face-to-face networking prior to data collection allowed access to participants, which may not have been as easily achieved by a telephone call or e-mail, and this enabled a smooth transition into the fieldwork.

As it happened, participant observation was quite limited and less important than was anticipated in the research design. There were a number of reasons for this, one being that at one of the organisations the office was so small and open that just one extra person being in the space impacted disproportionately on other workers. They were very aware of the researcher’s presence and this impacted on how they were communicating with other members of staff and service users. The researcher’s presence impacted so disproportionately on the environment that a true perspective on the service provision could not be gleaned. This is described by Matthews & Ross (2010: 259) as the ‘Hawthorne effect’, emphasising that “if people know that their behaviour is being observed, then it will change”. At another case study organisation, the researcher was shown accommodation and met

caseworkers but was never in the organisation when a service user was present. Nevertheless, participant observation gave a feel for the ethos of these organisations and the service they were trying to achieve.

The researcher attended meetings that involved other institutions that case study organisations worked with to provide services to military veterans. From the fieldwork diary, the researcher recognised the need to stand back from their practice experience and try to be as objective as possible acknowledging that the phenomena cannot be observed as an impartial observer. Having a practitioner background has some advantage. For example, it makes it easier for the researcher to relate to service providers, gain access and trust and to understand procedure, nuances of practice and technical jargon. However, the challenge is that the context of the exchange is to carry out research as a researcher, not as a practitioner. Perhaps this background means that the researcher is possibly more accepting of procedural compliance and bureaucratic control, therefore vigilance and awareness of 'questioning the familiar' is required. To mitigate this type of bias the researcher had to remain vigilant, independent and impartial, by continuously referring to the theoretical framework for this research, rather than practice experience for explanation. As relationships with participants within organisations developed, it was important to ensure a critical distance was maintained so that objectivity was ensured. In these circumstances, the researcher tried to be especially aware whilst undertaking participant observation to remain impartial and resist the temptation to go 'native'. In

practice, this can be difficult to achieve and to mitigate these circumstances a case study protocol was produced (see Appendix F) and referred to immediately prior to engagement with the organisations.

Constant vigilance during data collection was required to reduce familiarity with practice. After interviews/data collection was complete, reflections on the engagement were recorded in the fieldwork diary. Notes from the diary confirm that it was difficult to stand back from practice. However, it was felt that had the nuances/technical jargon not been understood prior to fieldwork it would have been difficult to assimilate proceedings at times, especially at meetings. A balance was therefore realised between objectivity and understanding.

### **Online survey with military veterans**

As discussed earlier in this chapter qualitative research with veterans was not feasible because they are a difficult to research group and the focus of the study was about organisations. Therefore, it was felt, the online sampling method had the potential to reach a larger proportion of the population of veterans, to glean a service user's perspective for this study. A self-administered survey was placed in a military online magazine and on their associated website (see Appendix D).

This online sampling method has its limitations; the sample is self-selecting (participants choose to complete the survey) which “implies that some units

in the population are more likely to be selected than others” (Bryman, 2004: 507). Additionally, a difficulty with sampling using online surveys is that respondents are over-represented in groups that include people in high-income households and white men under 35 with higher educational levels (Dolowitz *et al*, 2008: 131). However, more and more people are gaining skills and access to the internet. The sampling method is therefore non-representative and the data will not be generalised to the whole population. Nevertheless, internet research provides the potential to reach a higher number of participants (without gatekeeper involvement); therefore, the research can provide good quality and illustrative views from a user perspective.

The survey was designed to have mostly multiple closed questions to produce quantitative data. Some open-ended optional questions were included to provide the participants with the opportunity to provide more in-depth qualitative answers. The questionnaire was piloted by fellow students and academics, to evaluate quality. Crucial to the development of the survey, it was also tested with the intended survey group - military veterans. Testing with this group provided objective feedback for the researcher that enhanced the quality of the final questionnaire. The survey involved a free prize draw for £100 of High Street vouchers to encourage participation.

Flyers were placed at the advice agency and other organisations identified during fieldwork; this included a national military charity that distributed the



survey to their known contacts in Scotland. Initially, the uptake for the survey was slow, but after contact was made with a famous Scottish military charity, that placed the advert on their Facebook page, there was a notable increase in participation. If the survey had not been placed on Facebook, the uptake rate would have been very low. The final number of participants was  $n = 68$ .

### **Methods of data analysis**

In this study, the documentary evidence was mainly used in the writing up process to provide a description of the organisations. The fieldwork diary provided a recollection of the interviews and some initial analysis. Most of the analysis was provided from the data collected from the semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis was used to manipulate the qualitative data collected from the semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis is a process of sorting and considering how the raw data fits together and then categorising the themes that emerge. O'Connor *et al* (2003: 203) explain that applying categories across the whole data set “aids finding themes of examples which do not appear in an orderly way in the data; to aid location conceptual, analytical categories in the data; and to help get a handle on the data for making comparisons or connections”.

NVivo software was used for data management. The advantage of using NVivo software is that it provides an organised storage area, i.e. it helps the researcher to develop consistent coding schemes and they can “analyse

differences, similarities and relationships between coded elements” (Robson, 2011: 472). The use of Nvivo to store the material enabled access to specific themes, as they were stored in a more accessible system compared to the original interview transcripts. It also provides greater transparency and can manage and link many sources including memos, diaries, notes, documents and interviews. The software does not do the analysis, but coding is a crucial aspect of analysis (Saldaña, 2009: 6). NVivo was used as a tool to store the themes in categories allowing easier access compared to accessing and retrieving the raw data.

In this study, *a priori* codes were identified prior to coding (Bazeley, 2007). These codes were derived from Stoker’s and Hudson & Hardy’s theoretical frameworks, the research questions and the research propositions. Additional codes were added whilst analysing the interview transcripts. Bazeley (2007) discusses the importance of letting the data speak to you; this was done for research questions two and three, thus codes were identified when the data was examined, this is described as *in vivo*. So in essence, it was a mixture of using both *a priori* and *in vivo* codes to identify concepts and themes within the data. The analysis in Chapter Six was more informed by the theoretical framework, whilst the analysis in Chapters Seven and Eight was less structured. Even given these differences, the material was analysed with an interpretative approach constructing reality based on the researcher’s interaction with the area of study, and illuminating and finding meaning from the literature and the data collected.

Writing the findings chapters from the data stored in NVivo was the main method of analysis. This process allowed the identification of key themes that perhaps fitted with the literature or alternatively contradicted the literature. Some themes were dismissed, whilst others were identified as key. By doing this, ideas emerged that required deeper analysis to build on key themes, concepts and the findings of the study. Layering the writing in themes and analysing the writing developed the reporting of the thesis. This involved a continual process of deep thought and engaging with the material to allow the study to evolve.

So far this section has discussed the case study approach, the organisations and the participants involved, constructing validity and the methods of data collection and analysis. The next section will discuss research validity.

## Research validity

Yin (2009: 41) describes four commonly used tests to establish the quality of empirical social research. The quality of research design for the case studies was measured by adopting these four key criteria, and these are now individually considered:

Constructing validity was achieved by using multiple case studies.

Additionally, the case study frame provided multiple sources of evidence from interviews, documentation analysis, direct participation, field diary and observations. This triangulation of evidence, from various types of organisations and sources, provides different perspectives on the same issue, thus improving the validation of the study.

Internal validity is related to making the correct inferences from evidence that has not been observed (Yin, 2009: 43). Data produced and theories applied in this research provide explanation, therefore increasing validity. The research sought both convergent and rival explanations and patterns between the different case study organisations and the literature.

External validity in case studies focuses on relying on analytical generalisation (Yin, 2003: 37). Replication of findings in multi case studies may provide results that support theory rather than generalisation to a population. Replicating the study design at all four case study organisations was intended

to develop theory derived from the governance theoretical framework employed in this study.

Reliability is about minimising errors and biases in a study (Yin, 2003: 45). To mitigate errors and biases in this study, a case study protocol (see Appendix F) was produced. This protocol assisted in ensuring that what was being studied was being measured against original objectives. Additionally, using multiple sources of data input and feedback from two supervisors helped ensure reliability. This process guided the development of the research questions, the literature review, the topic guides and online survey. The supervisors provided direction and support during fieldwork and provided extensive comments on the findings chapters.

All of the four criteria above are based on being methodical and replicating the study design consistently at each of the case study organisations. However, in reality, the case study organisations were not exact replicas of each other, therefore the application of the study design could not be applied particularly consistently. For example, the type of participant interviewed at each of the case study organisations were not the same as they had different organisational roles. Equally, some organisations had better developed policies and some were more open to participation methods than others were. Nevertheless the case study protocol highlighted this inconsistency. In the following section, ethical issues relating specifically to the different elements of the study will be appraised, followed by the chapter's conclusion.

## **Ethics**

Ethical considerations are crucial to any research project. The study adopted the ESRC research ethics framework, which guided the whole of this research and the main principles are now examined and related to this study:

### **Research integrity**

Research integrity is about research being “designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity, quality and transparency” (ESRC, 2010: 3). This also relates to the research validity of the case studies discussed earlier in this chapter. The research was designed to include case studies of organisations and an online survey of veterans. This mixed methods approach triangulated findings, adding to the integrity, rigour and quality of the research.

The research was continually reviewed by two supervisors who checked the integrity and gave guidance to improve the quality of the study. The ethics procedure discussed in this chapter guided the whole of the study and was not merely seen as an exercise to discharge full ethical responsibility, post ethical approval (Robson, 2011: 198). The researcher is dedicated to undertaking high quality research and maintaining an ‘ethical compass’ that entails being reflexive, preserving personal and professional integrity and ensuring that their actions cause no harm to participants or themselves at all times.

Transparency was ensured by systematically recording and storing the data collected.

### **Informed consent**

Informed consent is focused on participants being fully informed about “the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved (ESRC, 2010: 3)”. Participants were given “as much information as possible about the research so that they can make an informed decision of their possible involvement” (Greener, 2011: 145). Appendices A, B and D all included information on the research. Fuller clarification was offered and as it happened, none of the participants or organisations required further clarification. The participants’ consent was gained prior to participation with consent forms completed and signed off (see Appendices C and D). At the beginning of the online survey, the participants were required to tick a box to confirm their consent; if this box was not ticked, access to the rest of the survey could not be gained.

The online survey method raised interesting ethical dilemmas. The ESRC considers that this type of research ‘involves more than a minimal ethical risk’. The issues raised include how to gain informed consent and how the researcher can establish the true identity of the participant (ESRC, 2010). The Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR) states that whilst the issues of consent can be problematic in traditional social research, “the transient and

ephemeral nature of many online environments, often combined with large, fluctuating, unknown and disembodied populations, can make this ideal particularly problematic” (Orton-Johnston, 2010).

The British Psychological Society suggest that if establishing the identity of participants is crucial to the study, perhaps internet research should not be used (British Psychological Society, 2007). This is not an exclusive problem of internet research; for example, postal questionnaires are also problematic when verifying participant identity. So, whilst the problem was acknowledged, it was not crucial to verify identity in this research and therefore this method was used. In terms of informed consent, the first page of the internet questionnaire explained the purpose of the research and who the researcher was.

### **Confidentiality and prevention of harm**

This relates to “the confidentiality of information supplied by research participants and the anonymity of respondents must be respected” (ESRC, 2010: 3). Data was stored in accordance with the data protection act (Directgov, 2009). The information was used accurately and was kept secure. The information will be destroyed after reporting is finalised. Recordings used for interviews were destroyed once transcribed. A written explanation as to why the interviews were recorded was provided to participants within the consent form (Appendix C). The recorded interviews were transcribed by a University of Stirling approved transcriber who signed a confidentiality agreement.



Organisations were not named in this research, but as this is a small field of operation, even if participants were not named they may be easily identifiable. Individual respondents were reassured that their contributions were confidential and their anonymity and personal identification would be protected. Individual names were not used in the research, however it was pointed out that even given anonymity they may still be recognised. If the material could be linked back to an individual or an organisation and it may be considered harmful, the researcher asked the participant if the information could be used. Only one participant asked to be contacted if they were being quoted at the write up stage. Contact was made with this participant to let them know how their quote had been reported and how the identifiers were developed. They were perfectly happy that anonymity had been maintained and with the quote being used.

Participant observation raises the problem of being involved in meetings that may produce material that would be beneficial to the research. This did not happen in this research. The researcher also had to consider personal relationships with research participants, and remain reflexive and objective. In these relationships, if a practitioner provides information that could be considered harmful to the person or the organisation, the information would not be used. As it happened, this scenario did not occur.

This leads onto the principle of prevention of harm. For some types of research, it is necessary to use deception or covert methods, and this has the potential to cause harm to participants. However, these methods were not used in the study. This research was not particularly contentious; the objective of the study was to obtain an understanding of how organisations work together and therefore was less about personal individual experiences. The online survey included some personal questions about participants' housing histories; however, it was not intended to cause harm and a list of support organisations was placed at the end of the survey in case it had caused distress. The list also included details of organisations participants could contact if they had unresolved housing problems.

### **Voluntary participation**

This principle requires that “research participants must take part voluntarily, free from any coercion” (ESRC, 2010: 3). This research adhered to this principle by informing participants that they had the right to refuse to participate or withdraw from the process at any time. Whilst the researcher had control over the administration of the access procedures, there was a potential issue with participant consent through gatekeepers (for the participants selected for interviews). To mitigate this scenario the researcher identified participants for the interviews (within the organisations) prior to the fieldwork, if possible. At times, gatekeeper access did occur and this was related to some individual participants suggesting key individuals to interview, and as it happened this worked. The suggested participants all had

familiarity with housing military veterans so were key to the study. It did not feel like the gatekeepers were obstructing access to individuals, but at the same time they might coerce other participants to take part. This type of participant may also be coerced into sanitising the truth, thus affecting the research results. This is relevant to the fieldwork; from the research diary, it was noted that senior staff answered questions more openly and candidly than junior staff did. One participant was hesitant; perhaps this was because they were concerned about their responses in case it contradicted their manager's view. As a researcher, it felt like this participant felt vulnerable because they were putting their trust in an unknown person who they had never met before and had no reason to trust. It did make me question how participants represent reality under these circumstances.

Bourdieu (1996: 18) discussed how research interviews are a social relationship and that various kinds of distortion can take place in this relationship. To mitigate these effects, Bourdieu discussed being reflexive, describing this as being adaptive to the social relationship to provide encouragement and opportune questioning of the participant who may "give up the truth". Perhaps this has its limitations as interview participants, in this study, are likely to be aware of this social exchange "to give up the truth". As a researcher, you have to be reflexive about understanding why and how participants protect their vulnerability and how this impacts on the truth. For example, in this instance of perceived vulnerability of the participant, perhaps they answered questions based on what they thought the

manager wanted them to say, rather than what they personally thought. To pursue questioning to ascertain the truth in these circumstances would likely cause distress to the participant and would therefore be unethical.

Researchers have to accept that at times the 'truth' will not be given up and it would be naive to think otherwise.

## CONCLUSION

The literature review identified three research questions that focus on organisational collaboration in the provision of housing services, in the specific context of military veterans. The research is largely interpretive and best fits a constructivism approach, which provides an understanding of how individuals interpret and construct meaning from their lived experiences and their interaction with society. This in turn impacts on how participants working in the organisations understand interactions and on how the researcher elicits and interprets findings from these individuals and constructs meanings, which can be multiple. This multiple nature particularly suits the use of case studies as a method, by eliciting and triangulating data from various sources. Within the case study frame, the main tool used to answer the research questions was semi structured interviews. The case study design was chosen because it answers the 'how' and 'why' questions when studying real-life contemporary phenomena. It generated qualitative data in relation to governance, partnerships and the complex delivery of public services, particularly housing services through networks.

Military veterans' perspective of engagement with services was obtained by collecting quantitative data from an online survey. Robson (2011: 166) highlighted how only a small amount of studies fully integrate qualitative and quantitative components. This is the case in this study, partly because of an incompatibility in timing, with the qualitative data being based on more

immediate experiences and the quantitative data being based on experiences up to ten years old. Nevertheless, the survey allowed access to gain a service user's perspective and to reach a difficult to research group; it also adds a different aspect to the study by adding the voice of those experiencing this type of mixed service provision.

The collection of empirical data was facilitated by adopting both a high-level theory (Stoker's five propositions of governance), the literature on networks and lower level theory (Hudson & Hardy's six principles of successful partnership working and five barriers to cooperation). The higher-level theory provided a lens to study how the case study organisations are affected by state control, and the lower level theory facilitated studying organisational collaboration in practice. To answer research question one, the governance theory was applied to the data. In contrast, questions two and three were answered in a less prescribed manner, allowing theory to develop from the data. This approach perhaps indicates that whilst Stoker's theory on governance provided an explanation for state involvement and it alluded to the messiness of service provision, it did not entirely give an explanation for what is happening at the service delivery level.

On reflection, an ethnographic study of just one organisation linking into the agencies that it works with may have provided a more in-depth study of collaboration outcomes. However, measuring outcomes was not a prime goal of the study. Rather, it sought to examine the nature of organisations

working together, with different types of institutions, in different areas of Scotland, to meet the housing needs of veterans. By undertaking case studies of a number of different organisations, this interpretive research provided an insight into the differences between public and third sector organisations, and how services were provided in different geographic areas of Scotland.

The next three chapters report the findings from the data collection, in order to answer the three research questions that emerged from the literature review chapters.

## CHAPTER 6

### GOVERNANCE AS A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

#### Introduction

Chapter Two examined the intricacy of governance. Adopting a governance theoretical framework helps us to understand the changes in governing and provides an organising tool to study this complexity (Stoker, 1998). For this research, studying governance focused attention on how the case study organisations are affected by state authority and how this impacts on their relationships with other institutions. These activities are focussed around organisational boundaries. Organisational boundaries are where boundary spanners (discussed in Chapter Three) operate to collaborate between different sectors. As noted earlier, under governance the third sector is increasingly being used to provide public services and, in this instance, to provide housing services for military veterans.

Chapter Two also considered the implications of Scottish devolved powers on housing, with commentators discussing policy divergence (Sim, 2004), whilst others remind us that Scotland still operates within the same fiscal and taxation systems as the rest of the UK (Murie, 2004). Indeed, some commentators suggest that there may be little difference in outcomes experienced between UK citizens (Rummary & Greener, 2012). These aspects



add to the complexity of this area of study and further test the validity of the framework.

This chapter applies the theoretical framework for this research: ‘Governance as theory: five propositions’ (Stoker, 1998). This framework aided the development of the topic guide for interviews; it was then applied to the data collected and findings were then analysed. The next section of this chapter applies the propositions to the data collected from the case studies and then analysis the themes that emerged through adopting this lens. This was done by examining both unique and common patterns (Bazeley, 2007) found between both individual participants and case study organisations.

### **Proposition 1**

“Governance refers to a set of institutions and actors that are drawn from, but also beyond, government” (Stoker, 1998: 18).

This proposition establishes ‘governance’ as a challenge to the government Westminster model. The Westminster unitary state with the one centre of power is now a fragmented, complex and messy system of organisations that provide public services (Stoker, 1998).

The advice agency conforms to this proposition, demonstrating organisational complexity and that the “governance perspective also draws attention to the increased involvement of the private and voluntary sectors in service delivery

and strategic decision-making” (Stoker, 1998: 19). Initially, the organisation appeared to be a public sector institution. However, the organisation is governed by a military charity, with the bulk of its funding provided by the local authority (LA), with these organisations involved in the development of the agency. Individuals within the three organisations work in partnership to continually develop the organisation and make links with other agencies.

Similarly, the charity conforms to this proposition in respect of organisational complexity. The charity’s structure was different to how it had first appeared. It has a dual organisational structure, both charitable and public, in order to maximise funding. The housing provision part of the charity operates as an RSL, whilst the marketing or fund raising arm operates as a charity. Major capital investment for building new accommodation is funded partly from government via their RSL status, and topped up with charitable donations. This organisation therefore has a hybrid nature, gaining funding through both the public and the third sectors. This follows through to service delivery; the charity works with other military charities, RSLs and LAs to support veterans into housing.

In contrast, the LA could be described as having the most traditional organisational structure, with governing determined by having elected council members. However, Stoker (1998: 21) describes the ‘hollowing-out’ of the national state as it “having lost power to the inter-governmental and local/regional level”. This local authority recognises the need to work with

partners to provide housing services. It conforms to this proposition, as this LA could not provide their range of services without working with a mixture of other organisation from both the public and third sectors.

The RSL formed in 2003 through a stock transfer of housing from the local authority. As an RSL, it has developed a governance framework with tenants' views at the heart of decision-making. It receives funding from government for developing homes, but in contrast to local authorities, it can fund developments using private funding. It works with both the public and third sectors to provide housing services to those in housing need, including veterans.

In summary, the governance arrangements for the advice agency and charity are complex, particularly the way the charity is configured to optimise funding. The advice agency does not provide a housing service directly, but accesses a multitude of services from the public, third and private sectors on behalf of veterans. The LA has a more traditional governance structure; however, the complexity of this model is the delivery of service through a network of providers, albeit the LA appears to be the most powerful because of their control over funding. The RSL was probably the least complex organisation, however the RSL does not merely provide housing; it is involved in dealing with anti-social behaviour, supporting vulnerable people to sustain their tenancies and providing veterans with links to employment.

This research has examined different types of organisations from the public and third sectors, providing organisational diversity. This organisational diversity, and the different institutions that they work with to provide a service, demonstrates the messy and fragmented delivery of public services. The complexity of governance over the government model is illustrated by a response from an individual interviewed in the advice agency who had served in the military. The respondent contrasts the governance of the military compared to the messiness of public service delivery, and illustrates the parallels between governance and government.

“In the military units are set up on the same template: you have the same job descriptions, same sort of number and then out here in the real world, each local authority’s different, they have different job titles. So just these subtle things just means that you’re not going to have a standard model per se, it’s going to have to be different. Just like the housing, the city is all decentralised, some of the other councils it’s centralised, some of the other ones it’s a kind of hybrid and it’s the same with their advice hubs as well, some do have drop in centres, you know, others don’t. So one model won’t fit all plus it really needs to integrate to whatever’s out there” (Advice agency/3)<sup>2</sup>.

Stoker (1998: 19) argued that this shared responsibility of service delivery between organisations lacks normative public support, with the public

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<sup>2</sup> Advice agency/3 = advice agency participant 3

favouring the traditional model (1998: 20). He expresses concern over the lack of legitimacy in the governance model compared to the “legitimising myths of traditional perspectives, such as the British Westminster model” (1998: 21). A response from a participant involved with the development of the advice agency illustrates the shift from services being delivered by local government to other providers:

“A key strength was, at the time when we were looking at where the service was going to sit within the council, we made a decision that maybe the council wasn’t the best place. So it’s that kind of democratic leadership as well where you’re saying maybe the council aren’t the best place to actually run this service, maybe it should be one of the charities” (Advice agency/4).

Stoker (1998: 18) argues that the rise of governance “undoubtedly refers to a degree, to a search for reductions in the resource commitment and spending of government”. Ironically, the advice agency was developed and financed from mostly public funds, not to provide a separate service, but to help veterans access the current array of public services available in the city. Jackson (2009 in Robichau, 2011: 119) debates the possibility that the future of government will be as brokers between the public and private sectors. Certainly public money is being used to fund third sector organisations with the remit to help their clients access what were traditionally public services. The complexity of the new governance configuration requires the public, at times, to have to access public services through brokerage or advocate

services such as the advice agency, or benefits or welfare rights agencies. For example, a practitioner at the advice agency (advice/1) explained how veterans often have to complete numerous and differing housing applications to be housed in one area. There are a large number of RSLs in the city with differing housing allocation policies and application forms. As identified in the literature review, the emphasis on partnership working is to counter the fragmentation of public services (Dickinson & Glasby, 2010:812; Fenwick, Miller & McTavish, 2012: 40; Rhodes, 2000; Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002). The impact on the public is how difficult it is for them to access public services within the governance model. Proposition one, in some ways, is one of the least contentious. All of the case study organisations conform to this proposition in different ways. This leads onto proposition two:

## **Proposition 2**

“Governance identifies the blurring of boundaries and responsibilities for tackling social and economic issues” (Stoker, 1998: 21).

This proposition identifies that:

“The governance perspective not only recognises the increased complexity in our systems of government, it also draws our attention to a shift in responsibility, a stepping back of the state and a concern to push responsibilities onto the private and voluntary sectors and, more broadly, the citizen” (Stoker, 1998: 21).

This proposition recognises that in some aspects, the third sector has taken over some of the traditional tasks of government and this has resulted in blurring of boundaries. However, this blurring of responsibility produces ambiguity and uncertainty and this can lead to blame avoidance and scapegoating (Stoker, 1998: 22). In the last section (proposition 1), the diversity of the organisations selected for the case studies was discussed; in this section the diversity of the actors interviewed within the organisations is relevant. The data conforms to this proposition in some ways, illustrated in the following quote from a participant at the RSL, relating to the lack of clear lines of responsibility and the messy delivery of public services:

“I’ve had many issues and some are on-going about what is the council’s responsibility and if you want a specific example, what we have is a protocol whereby that if there was a good behaviour agreement that needed to be drawn up and signed, the council would be asked to do that. Now the council doesn’t need to do that, they don’t have a role in it, but they then become part of the mix and our tenants don’t know who they should go to never mind anybody else” (RSL/4).

This links back to the previous proposition, illustrating how the messy delivery of public services in the governance model makes it difficult for the public to negotiate.

“Because of the changes in society and the expectations on RSLs, we’re becoming more involved in providing informal support to our tenants, and my belief is that we can’t become and can’t do the job of social services or we’ll need an army of people out there, and I can give you examples whereby our neighbourhood managers or housing officers are out there trying to deal and putting in hours and hours and hours to try and get someone to sustain their tenancy, when clearly that is the role of social services to do. And that is becoming more and more prevalent and what we have now set up is a process whereby we have to be able to review these cases and say to social services ‘look, enough, we can’t do this anymore’ and get them to understand that” (RSL/4).

Participants from two different case study organisations commented on how the service user can blur the boundaries by involving two different agencies to work on the same problem, leading to tensions between the agencies.

Participant (LA/3) commented on how the third sector is increasingly likely to be vying for scarce funding. The participant went on to describe how in the past these organisations were content to operate within the same geographic area and do what they have always done, but now they realise that funding is not guaranteed. This has the potential for these types of organisations to expand beyond their traditional boundaries and to access other funding sources, which could lead to a blurring of boundaries with other providers. A respondent from an organisation that worked with the charity felt that whilst



working with other providers to house veterans, boundary lines were very clear at the allocation point. However they went on to say that:

“It becomes a bit more murky when it comes to who’s responsible for ensuring that the client maintains the tenancy and doesn’t quite reach that point where they’re about to be evicted, who’s responsible along those lines and that’s where it gets quite messy” (Charity/4).

Whilst some respondents thought that their roles and organisational responsibilities were clear, and that partnership working enhanced the understanding of each other’s roles, one senior manager at the LA thought that:

“A degree of ambiguity and uncertainty is almost inherent in the nature of partnership working, so I’m not so sure it’s a bad thing” (LA/6). The respondent went on to explain that there are probably good and bad examples of working in partnership with other agencies. Giving a good example where there is a relationship of trust and where individuals leave their ‘siloes responsibilities’ behind and actually fully engage in what might be the best solution and work towards achieving that. Without worrying too much about boundary issues or responsibilities. The following quotes from the respondent highlight the inherent tensions that blurring of boundaries cause and identify why it is necessary in partnership working.

“However those same issues - the ambiguity and lack of clarity can result in confusion and inability to progress things because of lack of clear responsibility and who’s actually going to try and drive things forward, so it’s a double edged sword” (LA/6).

“The risk of failure through lack of regulation, that lack of ability to be quite clear about who’s responsible for what and where, and therefore being held rigidly accountable for that. There can be a kinda (sic) sense that if you take risks in partnership and you are prepared to invest in that, some of the lines of accountability and responsibility are a bit less clear. And when that works well, that’s definitely a risk worth taking. I suppose if you’ve too many failures then you become risk averse. And I think if you get the tone of that wrong then... that then permeates the engagement right throughout the organisation because people require to feel comfortable in terms of where their own boundaries are, how much can they commit to this, how much freedom have they got? And that probably differs depending on the nature of the engagement” (LA/6).

The respondent went on to discuss the integration of health and social care; they interpreted this as partnership working at a different level, yet the boundary issues do not seem to have been resolved. The respondent provides an example of how, on an annual basis, there is the NHS/social work disagreement around delayed discharge from hospital:

“And if you’re looking from the outside in on that: It doesn’t look like they’ve had an integrated joined up approach at all. And so what we’ve now got is a degree of direction from government that is saying ‘well actually we’re gonna (sic) take these boundaries off and it’s no longer acceptable for you to just engage within a loose partnership construct, we’re gonna (sic) dictate that there needs to be a closer integration with a single shared approach, single shared resource and a single focus on getting a better outcome.” “ It changes the parameters and almost forces, if force is needed, social work and health colleagues to sit in the same room and lose their organisational shackles and work more closely to deliver better outcomes. That seems to me to be a good thing and almost pushes the notion of partnership working that bit further” (LA/6).

A senior manager who works with the advice agency (Advice Agency/4) commented on how it was empowering to take a leap of faith without formal agreements, and to be bold and agree on a good idea. They explain that to do this organisations have to be prepared to share staff and resources and to give up something for the common good of what the group is trying to achieve; they have to be prepared to take risks. As identified by Hudson & Hardy (2002: 57) “the health of any partnership could be measured in terms of the ‘sacrifice’ that one partner is prepared to make for the collective good, that is, the willingness to subsume self-interest to general interest”. Another senior participant at an RSL who works with the advice agency (Advice agency/5) commented on how an organisation can have shared aims

and objectives for partnership working, but if the individuals within the organisations have different values, understanding or experiences, the aims and objectives may fail.

Governance recognises the blurring of boundaries, and “the blurring of responsibilities that can lead to blame avoidance or scapegoating” (Stoker 1998: 19). This research found a contradiction between senior staff at a strategic level, who recognised the need and benefit of blurring of boundaries for partnership working to be successful and this links to the discussion in the next chapter regarding the challenges to collaborative working. Whereas the operational level staff identified that they required clear lines of responsibility and boundaries. This may indicate that partnership working at the case study organisations is at a quite basic level. Although there were a number of practice examples given of blurring of boundaries. Equally, the advice agency was explicitly set up to work in partnership, to provide access for veterans to services, so the expectation was that they would be achieving a high level of partnership working. It indicates that the policy objective of blurring of boundaries is more difficult to achieve in practice.

The literature on partnership working has identified serious weaknesses regarding the practice and concept of partnership working (Dickinson & Glasby, 2010; William & Sullivan, 2010). Intrinsically, partnership working makes sense, i.e. sharing resources, trusting partners and providing welfare services in collaboration. In practice, it can be difficult for organisations to

achieve. This disparity between the strategic and operational levels may be partly why partnership working fails at times. Those at the operational level do not have the same power as those at the strategic level, with the former requiring clear boundaries to avoid blame or scapegoating. As discussed in proposition one, commentators have argued that partnership working is seen as a solution to resolve the problem of fragmented service delivery.

Therefore, the government could see blurring of the boundaries as a positive effect of governance.

Inherent in the shift in responsibility for the delivery of public services is the complexity of organisations providing these services. This shift has the potential to limit the production of services, as the ambiguity and lack of clarity produced by the blurring of organisational boundaries can result in a lack of progress and stalemate. Unless there are powerful actors within the network who are prepared to give up resources and take risks, the benefits of blurring of boundaries and a seamless production of public services cannot be realised. In the context that blurring of boundaries is necessary for successful partnership working and in theory should provide better coordination in the delivery of public services.

### **Proposition 3**

“Governance identifies the power dependence involved in the relationships between institutions involved in collective action” (Stoker, 1998: 22). Power dependence implies that:

- a. “Organisations committed to collective action are dependent on other organisations;
- b. In order to achieve goals organisations have to exchange resources and negotiate common purposes;
- c. The outcome or exchange is determined not only by the resources of the participants but also by the rules of the game and the context of the exchange” (Stoker, 1998: 22).

The advice agency clearly conforms to Stoker’s power dependency theory as the organisation is completely dependent on other institutions to provide a service. It does not exchange resources; however, it does negotiate on behalf of veterans. Interestingly, the context of the exchange is highly relevant, i.e. when veterans’ support issues are currently receiving a high degree of societal interest. Perhaps this enables the exchange with other institutions, as organisations are currently particularly willing to work together on behalf of this group. This complies with Stoker’s (1998: 22) argument that “the outcome of exchange is determined not only by the resources of the participants but also by the rules of the game and the context of the exchange”. Had, for example, the exchange been about clients with substance abuse problems, perhaps there would be less of a willingness to work together for this group.

A senior participant involved in the establishment of the advice agency commented:

Everybody's given up a bit of their organisational power because they're working in a partnership, whereas normally if it was the council and I was responsible for it, then I would be the manager and I would be saying to the advice agency 'right, this is what I want you to do and this is how I want you to do it' because I would be overall responsible for it. Whereas it's kind of that delegated authority, it's democratic kind of authority where I work in partnership" (Advice agency/4).

In contrast, the charity is a completely different type of organisation. It provides a service and it has historical roots. The organisation is evolving and recognises that it needs to establish links with other institutions to meet the changing needs of the younger veteran. Participant Charity/1 commented on how the organisation is dependent on others, however, if it decided to it could function on its own, but it would not be able to achieve its organisational goals. The charity recognises the need to exchange resources and work with others, but they have identified that some veterans' charities are failing to see the need to work with others. As participant (Charity/3) commented, this is problematic as to maintain services in the future it will become necessary to work together because the funding streams are becoming limited and "we can't all keep dipping into the same pot all the time".

The current context within which veterans' organisations operate was described by one respondent as veterans' agencies 'being a victim of their own success'.

"Veterans' issues have become very much a hot topic and as a result a lot of charities have sprung up, a lot of new organisations and there's a lot of duplication, I think. So everyone's sort of fighting over the same thing and we should all be fighting together for the same goal. So I think it's partly to do with the economy and partly just to do with the fact that there are so many out there now, everyone's trying to get themselves noticed and their head above the water" (Charity/4).

The LA recognises that they may appear to dominate within any partnership. This is because so many organisations are dependent upon them for funding, and ultimately with money comes power. However, even when funding is cut, partners are still committed to collective action. Equally, some of the organisations that rely on funding have powerful people on their boards of management, for example councillors, therefore the LA find that they have to negotiate the balance of power. This negotiation with partners has to be done through agreement, and this can mean the process takes longer.

"So as I say, the good thing about it to be honest is that there is a genuine inter-dependency, so neither is likely to walk away from it. The challenge



that comes with it is just managing that relationship, but I have to say it is a bit of an effort sometimes, but generally it's worth the effort" (LA/3).

As identified by Stoker, "in a governance relationship no one organisation can easily command, although one organisation may dominate a particular process of exchange". He goes on to argue that local councils have to draw on resources from third and private sector organisations. "Local councils could demand resources to become a significant player, an attractive partner, but they cannot demand autonomy" (Stoker, 1998: 22). The following quotes relate to power dependences:

"We'd like to see it as an equal partnership, but ultimately the council has to respond to a number of different considerations and one of them being we have to balance our budget and that may not at every point suit a partner because we have to make savings or reductions in funding. I believe that the council being the body it is, the influences it has on local organisations through governance, funding, support in kind, I would probably say that we're probably the more equal partner in that partnership at the present time! But I think that would go for most councils in Scotland" (LA/4).

"The LA has to be mindful of what the needs of area are, rather than what the needs of a particular local organisation are, and sometimes that will run contrary to the interests of that local organisation. But by sitting down and trying to talk that through, hopefully we'll get to a

win/win at the end of the day. But no, I think some of the local organisations will see us as a dominant partner in any relationship because we just are that kind of beast basically, it's a big organisation" (LA/4).

Participant (LA/4) explained how some organisations see themselves as being autonomous and have differing ethos and policies. For example, an organisation that the council funds only provides housing for clients in a certain age group. However, the council had clients in housing need that did not meet this age criteria. So to some extent the council want partner organisations to keep their autonomy, however they still want to apply a consistent approach to service delivery. This inconsistency can result in conflict between the different agencies.

A senior manager at the LA commented on how they strive for equity of power and indeed that would be a core part of the partnership ethos: "However, the reality is we're probably not there yet and so within that community planning partnership and the major partners, I suppose the reality is that some partners are more major than others and that's probably most evident in the relationship between the public sector and the third sector, the voluntary sector, where increasingly there is a view that the third sector have got a significant role to play within the delivery of the partnership's objectives, but the third sector's capacity to play that role is challenging. So I'm not so sure... there's more work needs to be done to get them more

engaged and get them to a place where they feel they're an equal partner in terms of some of the discussions and debate" (LA/6).

"Other departments within the council... I wouldn't say it's a power struggle, I would say it's probably just a different way of working more than anything, and there just has to be... you know, we do find especially with social work that they've got a huge remit as well and it's kind of more trying to be informative and communicate to try and get the end goal, rather than a power struggle if you like. I wouldn't say there's anybody that I've certainly come across, and it's the same even from the homeless perspective. Obviously they're working to the homeless guidance as well which is different to ours, but we're all council, so... there is problems and there is issues on a daily basis, but they obviously have to be worked through to get the end goal, but I wouldn't say it's kind of power struggles if you like" (LA/1).

"We're certainly dependent on the partners to do their part of the partnership, if you like... we're in it together so there is... and likewise they depend on us as a council because we're providing the service in terms of the partnership, so I think there's a huge reliance on the council, we're the biggest landlord out of the Common Housing Register partnership, we host the common housing register team which is where all the assessment is done, so I think there's a dependency there, but I think we depend on each other for advice and assistance and support" (LA/1).

A respondent (LA/5) from an RSL working in partnership with the LA commented on how they felt that there had only been an increased equity of power and data sharing in the past two years. One of the reasons why they thought this was the case was the development of the Common Housing Register. Prior to that, the respondent commented on how RSLs were seen as outsiders. They did feel that the Common Housing Register was slightly biased towards the council, but they thought that was more to do with the system, and amendments have been made to suit the RSLs. They identified that the development of the Common Housing Register enabled working together. It appears that the council is the dominant participant in partnership working, mostly through providing resources, including finance and a data management system.

In the context the RSL case study, a charity partner that works with the RSL commented on how it tries to limit its dependence on council funding because:

“You're not able to represent your clients cause (sic) people threaten to pull your funding if you make a nuisance of yourself” (RSL/1).

The RSL has a large development and regeneration programme, but they are dependent on government money to fund it. Additionally, they are dependent on the council for funding. The council is dependent on the RSL to meet their statutory homeless obligation, as the council no longer owns housing stock. Whilst the voluntary sector does not rely on the RSL for

funding, it does make referrals to this sector. On the surface, this demonstrates Stoker's theory that "organisations committed to collective action are dependent on other organisations" and "in order to achieve goals organisations have to exchange resources and negotiate common purposes" (Stoker, 1998: 22). What this empirical evidence demonstrates is that these negotiations can be fraught, challenging and time consuming.

Respondent (RSL/4) felt that within certain groups there is equity of power, but when it comes to delivery of service there is an inequity of who will deliver what:

"Because obviously people think the councils and NHS are going to deliver everything for them and they think third sector will help them. I think what I try to do is get a balance across to see where we can help each other and I realise that, for instance, council social work (if it's a case of PTSD) are going to have to do some work with the NHS social work, so I'll hopefully get sort of case management done through the officers that are actually there cause (sic) there's a social work officer on the group as well. But I think there's an understanding that because the NHS or council being the biggest employers in the area, being a public service, then they will hopefully deliver the biggest amount, but I'm starting to see a lot more partnership working between the third sector and the public sector bodies" (RSL/4).

This same respondent commented on how they regularly attend ‘firm base’ meetings organised by the MoD. These meetings are attended by representatives from the military charities, the Citizen’s Advice Bureau, the RSL, social work, Job Centre, police, local council and the prison service. The respondent felt that at these meetings there was joint consensus on working together. At one of these meetings a participant commented on how well that particular group worked together, compared to other groups that they were involved with. When I asked why, they said it was because there was a consensus within the group that they wanted to help the military veterans. This supports Stoker’s (1998: 22) argument that “the outcome of exchange is determined not only by the resources of the participants but also by the rules of the game and the context of the exchange”. There appears to be a particular willingness of individuals or institutions to work together on behalf of this group. This raises the question of how sustainable some of these services and partnerships will be when this issue drops from the public consciousness, especially upon the cessation of combat operations in Afghanistan, expected in 2014.

In summary, all of the case study organisations are involved in power dependencies to different degrees. The advice agency was completely dependent on other organisations for funding and to provide services. In contrast, the charity was dependent on others for funding, but could operate independently from other organisations. However, they see the benefit of working with others to provide the best service for their clients. Of all the

case study organisations, the charity appeared to be the most autonomous. The LA is a very powerful partner, given that organisations are dependent upon it for funding; it is then dependent on other institutions to deliver public services. The RSL is dependent on other organisations for funding, but the council is dependent on the RSL to meet its statutory homeless obligation.

Hardly surprisingly, power dependencies are being played out at all of the case study organisations. However, some organisations are more powerful than others, particularly those in the public sector and, through funding, these institutions exert control over others involved in collective action. They do this because the public sector is responsible for meeting statutory obligations (set out by central government), so it uses its power to ensure that organisations in the third sector conform to this aim collectively. This lack of autonomy links to proposition four:

#### **Proposition 4**

“Governance is about autonomous self-governing networks or actors” (Stoker, 1998: 23).

“Governance networks, involve, not just influencing government policy but taking over the business of government”. “Actors and institutions gain a capacity to act by blending their resources, skills and purposes into a long-term coalition: a regime” (Stoker, 1998: 23). Stoker (1998: 23) describes these network regimes as a response to “the challenge of governing without

government.” However, “the dilemma created by the emergence of such self-governing networks is that of accountability” (Stoker, 1998: 23).

This proposition from a network governance perspective has been applied to the data firstly by considering how autonomous the case study organisations are from the state. This makes the assumption that if the organisations and the actors do not have autonomy from the state they cannot commit to autonomous self-governing networks. As discussed in Chapter Two Hudson *et al* (2007: 57) state that it is “unclear when networks are likely to be autonomous and in what ways”. Also, commentators (Hudson *et al*, 2007: 57; Marsh Richard & Smith, 2003: 315; Klijn & Kippenjan, 2000: 151) argue that state actors are not external to networks, that they are key players in policy making and that they have a special position in networks based on their resources and objectives.

The advice agency’s organisational complexity contrasts with Stoker’s (1998: 23) proposition four in the context that, crucially through funding, the organisation and the actors are totally dependent on the parent organisation. It would therefore appear to be impossible for this type of organisation to be self-governing as they are governed through a separate charity and therefore regulated by the charity commission. The governance of the organisation is through a steering and operational group, and the responsibility for these groups sits within the local council. The advice agency has not taken over the business of government; ironically, it has been set up to access public services traditionally provided by government including benefits, housing and



employment. This is a new dilemma; governance is used to describe the fragmentation of what were traditionally government provided public services.

In contrast, the charity is not dependent on other organisations; however, it sees the need to work with other agencies to meet its objectives. It currently does not fit the model of “actors and institutions gain a capacity to act by blending their resources, skills and purposes into a long-term coalition: a regime” (Stoker, 1998: 23). However, it is in the process of evolving to work with other organisations.

So whilst the charity is probably the most autonomous of the case study organisations, it is highly regulated by the Care Commission, local authorities HMO licensing (housing in multiple occupation), the Scottish Housing Regulator and the Charity Commission. Stoker (1998:23) argues, “self-organised systems of control among the key participants are seen as more effective than government imposed regulation”. He (1998:23) goes on to discuss “the dilemma created by the emergence of such self-governing networks is that of accountability”. There is a contradiction here, in that the context that government and not network governance appears to control accountability at the charity and, to different degrees, at the other case study organisations.

The LA has the most developed regime of partnership working. In some ways, this model fits proposition four, but crucially as a local authority it is a state actor promoting state policies. A participant identified that it could be challenging to work with other organisations funded by LA that still, to a certain extent, see themselves as autonomous:

“And want to emphasise their individuality and we do want that to a certain extent, but it’s coming back to having a consistent approach. Never the less, we need them to do certain things in certain ways so that we can be sure that people are getting a standard of service wherever they go to, and it’s fine to have some variations on top of that” (LA/3).

This comment is relevant to the power relationship discussed at proposition three, but also indicates that, again through funding, autonomy is limited by organisations that have the most power. In certain respects it appears that the LA blends resources and skills and is part of a long term coalition regime to provide housing, although the financial resources are determined by the LA. However, the regime cannot be autonomous as the LA is highly regulated by government. Equally, the partners within the regime are highly dependent on the LA for funding and through this mechanism; the council limits the autonomy of the other partners. They use this control to meet their statutory legislation laid out by the government. This contradicts Stoker’s (1998: 23) argument that “regimes are formed to provide regulation and order without resort to the over-arching authority of a supranational government. In short,

regimes are a response to the challenge of governing without government”. The contradiction is that the regulation at the case study organisations is derived from central government, so they are ‘governing with government’. The RSL works together with a local military charity and a national military charity to provide housing services for military veterans. It has links with the MoD, social work, prison service, Citizen Advice Bureau and local charities. It is evident that a regime or networks have been formed in this area; from a collaboration perspective, some of these exchanges between the organisations could best be described as information sharing rather than integrated partnerships. Arguably, they are governing without government, but crucially this regime does not provide regulation; this is provided by government, therefore the governance of this regime is still within the shadow of the hierarchical state.

Stoker’s concern about autonomy and lack of regulation is reflected by Billis, (2010: 3) who discusses the rise of hybrid organisations and describes them “as organisations that possess ‘significant’ characteristics of more than one sector (public, private and third)”. He uses partially nationalised banks such as Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac as examples. Later, he discusses the notoriety of these organisations and the fact they have been blamed for the global financial collapse. Indeed these organisations have been labelled by some as the ‘the abominable hybrid’. He discusses the disquiet felt by many of this type of organisation that does not have “explicit clarity of accountability either to the state or the market” (Billis, 2010: 12). Billis

(2010) concludes by highlighting that whilst Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac provide an example of the problem of hybrids, more hybrids were formed to respond to this financial disaster.

The RSL has some hybrid characteristics in the context that they can receive funding from both the public and private sectors. However, they are regulated by the Scottish Housing Regulator and, to a lesser extent, the Care Commission. The RSL has more autonomy than the council does, but at the same time, it cannot be described as autonomous.

In summary, proposition four was firstly applied to consider if the organisations were autonomous from the state, making the assumption that if the organisations and actors did not have this autonomy they could not commit to autonomous self-governing networks. This study has examined four different organisations from the public and third sectors, to provide organisational diversity. However, even given this diversity, proposition four is the most contentious and difficult to apply to the data of all of the five propositions. The study finds evidence that networks are being formed, but within these networks, all of the organisations are regulated, with some, such as the charity and the LA, being regulated by multiple organisations. Whilst the advice agency is the least regulated of all the organisations, it receives most of its funding from the local authority, and as such, the local authority is heavily involved with the governance of the advice agency. Therefore, the networks cannot be described as autonomous, as through regulation and

funding they still function within government control. The research suggests that local authorities can limit the autonomy of organisations that they work with through funding regimes. The level of autonomy differs between each case study organisation and, whilst they have been forming regimes with other organisations, these networks cannot be described as ‘autonomous’ from the state. They are formed in the shadow of the hierarchical state (Peters & Pierre, 2006). Klijn (2008: 510) discusses how networks are influenced by professional codes, protocols and the direct and indirect influence of government. He suggests replacing the notion of self-steering networks with self-organising. Proposition four might be a better fit for organisations in the hybrid or private sector that have not been examined for this research.

### **Proposition 5**

“Governance recognizes the capacity to get things done which does not rest on the power of government to command or use its authority, it sees government as able to use new tools and techniques to steer and guide” (Stoker, 1998: 24)

The challenge of this proposition is the need for government to find appropriate measures to steer and enable “which challenges past hierarchical modes of thinking” (Stoker, 1998: 24). Even when the government finds the appropriate tools, governance can still fail “because of inadequacies that bridge the gaps between public, private and voluntary sectors, failure in

leadership and tensions in society”. Stoker (1998: 26) describes how the institutions have to have “a sustainable life, but that are capable of evolution, learning and adaptation”.

The advice agency is a relatively new organisation and it is constantly evolving, learning, adapting and making new links and partnerships. The advice agency sees the need to connect with other organisations to improve the position of housing for veterans, and this involves engaging with the local prison and military charities. It continually identifies gaps in service provision and endeavours to make new links with other organisations, including the NHS (for mental health issues), employment programmes and social services. It also intends to seek connections with housing associations and promote the model out with the area, as its client groups do not necessarily identify with the city's geographic boundary. The original remit for the advice agency was to take on cases, work out the problem and refer on to other agencies. However, in practice it has gone beyond this remit and work in-house, bringing in specialists to improve outcomes.

The charity is evolving and adapting to meet the needs of younger veterans and helping them to move on to live independently in their own homes. It promotes and provides awareness of veterans’ issues. It recognises that within the ex-service charities it can only do so much, and it needs to link into housing associations, council housing providers and the private rented sector.

The LA actively seeks new partners to join its housing register. It proactively makes contacts with veterans' organisations such as SSAFA, local regiments, the Job Centre and the Citizens Advice Bureau. The LA is working with other organisations to provide a tenancy sustainment service in preparation for the Government's new welfare reforms, i.e. by introducing Universal Credit. It also recognises that in terms of the local community plans:

“There will be different needs in different areas that housing can make a contribution to. So we are already working with community safety partners in seven areas; it may be that new organisations/new partners come to light in different guises in these local community planning partnerships that we will have to say ‘right, how can we work with you, what can you contribute/what can we contribute to the relationship’ (LA/4)?

An example of how the RSL is ‘getting things done without the power of government’ is that it identified that homeless military veterans were being housed in temporary bed and breakfast accommodation. In response, it amended its housing allocations policy to ensure a quota of lets were available for ex-service personnel. It has established an armed forces portal on its website, providing information for personnel who are about to resettlement in the area. The RSL actively seek gaps in service provision and see how it can meet the demand. Additionally, it is working with a charity to provide employment for veterans.

In summary, there are many examples from this research appearing to demonstrate that the organisations that work together are ‘getting things done without the power of government’ (proposition 5). All of the case study organisations are making links and forming networks with other organisations in order to achieve their objectives and house military veterans. Perhaps this is a myth of the governance model, in the context that the government appears to have relinquished power whilst using new tools to steer and guide. In reality, and as discussed in Chapter Two, the government has changed their ‘modus operandi’ (Peter & Pierre, 2006) and blurred the boundaries of government by working with other organisations out with government, to provide public services but they have maintained control through regulation, legislation and funding. The government has moved from control by hierarchical top-down structure, to a more diffuse bottom-up control of power. Peters & Pierre (2006) argue that this sophisticated method of power removes some shackles of bureaucracy so that government now has the ability to be more controlling. However, this success does not necessarily change the outcome; governance can still fail and this links into proposition two that identified why, at times, partnership working fails.



## CONCLUSION

In applying Stoker's (1998) governance theoretical framework, this chapter sought to examine how the case study organisations 'fit' a governance perspective. The research benefited from the diversity of the organisations selected from the public and third sectors and from the range of individuals interviewed. The type of agencies involved included an advice agency, a charity, an LA and an RSL. This represents the complexity of housing service provision and the range of providers who deliver these services. It demonstrates the complexity that veterans are expected to negotiate to be housed. This fragmentation of service delivery makes accessibility difficult for service users. In certain areas of practice the government now fund brokerage services for the 'public' to access what were traditionally 'public services' and this was evident in this study.

Organisational boundaries are an important aspect of governance, and blurring of boundaries is essential for partnerships or organisational mergers but it can produce ambiguity and uncertainty. What has emerged from the data is a mismatch between the powerful strategic senior staff and the operational staff. With the former recognising the need for blurring of the boundaries and the latter requiring clear organisational boundaries, perhaps because they fear the blame and scapegoating that blurring of the boundaries can cause, and they may not have the capacity or remit to work or take risks beyond their organisational boundaries. This provides one explanation for the difficulties encountered in the pursuit of organisational collaboration. Albeit

the current high profile of supporting military veterans enables collaboration because organisations are particularly open to promoting this group.

One aspect of governance is that it focuses attention on power dependencies between organisations. To different degrees, power dependencies were evident at all of the case study organisations, with some organisations being more powerful and less dependent than others, particularly those institutions that provide funding. The complexity of power dependencies makes it difficult to ascertain if genuine collaboration takes place, or if it is an illusion that masks the fact that decision-making remains at the individual organisations through their siloed responsibilities.

The governance perspective emphasises that organisations operate as autonomous self-governing networks of actors. Although, the autonomy from the state is disputed by some commentators (see Chapter Two). In this study, the level of autonomy differed between each case study organisation. Whilst they have all been forming networks with other organisations and ‘getting things done without the power of government’ to achieve their organisational objectives, these networks and activities are formed in the shadow of the hierarchical state, through control by legislation, regulation and funding. The government now adopts more sophisticated methods of control; they have not relinquished power they have just changed their command methods (Peters & Pierre, 2006). These tools are used by the state to guide and steer, but these instruments are imperfect and can still lead to failure and this links into why, at times, partnership working fails. The data fits with Klijn’s (2008: 510)

assumption that because networks are influenced by professional codes, protocols and the direct and indirect influence of government, they are more likely to be self-organising rather than self-steering.

Stoker (1998) stated that the governance perspective was date and place specific. This study found that it still appears to resonate with current issues, such as the study of boundaries between state and society and the power of the state. Even given that one of the propositions did not fit this research, the framework 'identified key features of complex reality' to study in the provision of housing services, and in this instance for military veterans. In conclusion, Stoker's framework is deceptively simple and is still relevant today, albeit it is less effective at exploring the experiences of those delivering and receiving services. The next two chapters will explore this gap, focussing on service production and consumption.

## CHAPTER 7

### CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the data collected in this study in relation to collaborative working, and corresponds with the literature review drawing on the ideas presented in Chapter Three. The previous chapter applied a governance theoretical framework to the data to explore how the state impacts on collaboration. A further level of complexity exists below this at the organisational level.

Hudson & Hardy (2002) developed frameworks to capture partnership working, which were examined in Chapter Three. The six principles of successful partnerships provide a framework based on what facilitates joint working, which include themes such as trust, commitment and establishing a robust partnership arrangement. This was used to guide the collection of the data, which is presented in the first part of this chapter. However, the data did not fit neatly into what facilitates partnership working compared to the barriers.

What became of greater relevance were Hudson & Hardy's (2002) five categories of barriers to co-ordination (see Figure 3.3). Some of these categories overlapped with Stoker's (1998) propositions of governance and

Rhodes' model of policy networks (1992). This overlap is demonstrated in Figure 3.6; the themes included the messiness of service delivery, blurring of organisational boundaries, power, rules of the game, autonomy and getting things done without hierarchical government. What Hudson & Hardy's framework did was apply governance concepts to the practice of partnership working. These categories aided the collection of the data, but did not fully encompass the complexity found within it. Subsequently, the literature on governance and networks is used to provide a deeper level of analysis, particularly in the second part of this chapter.

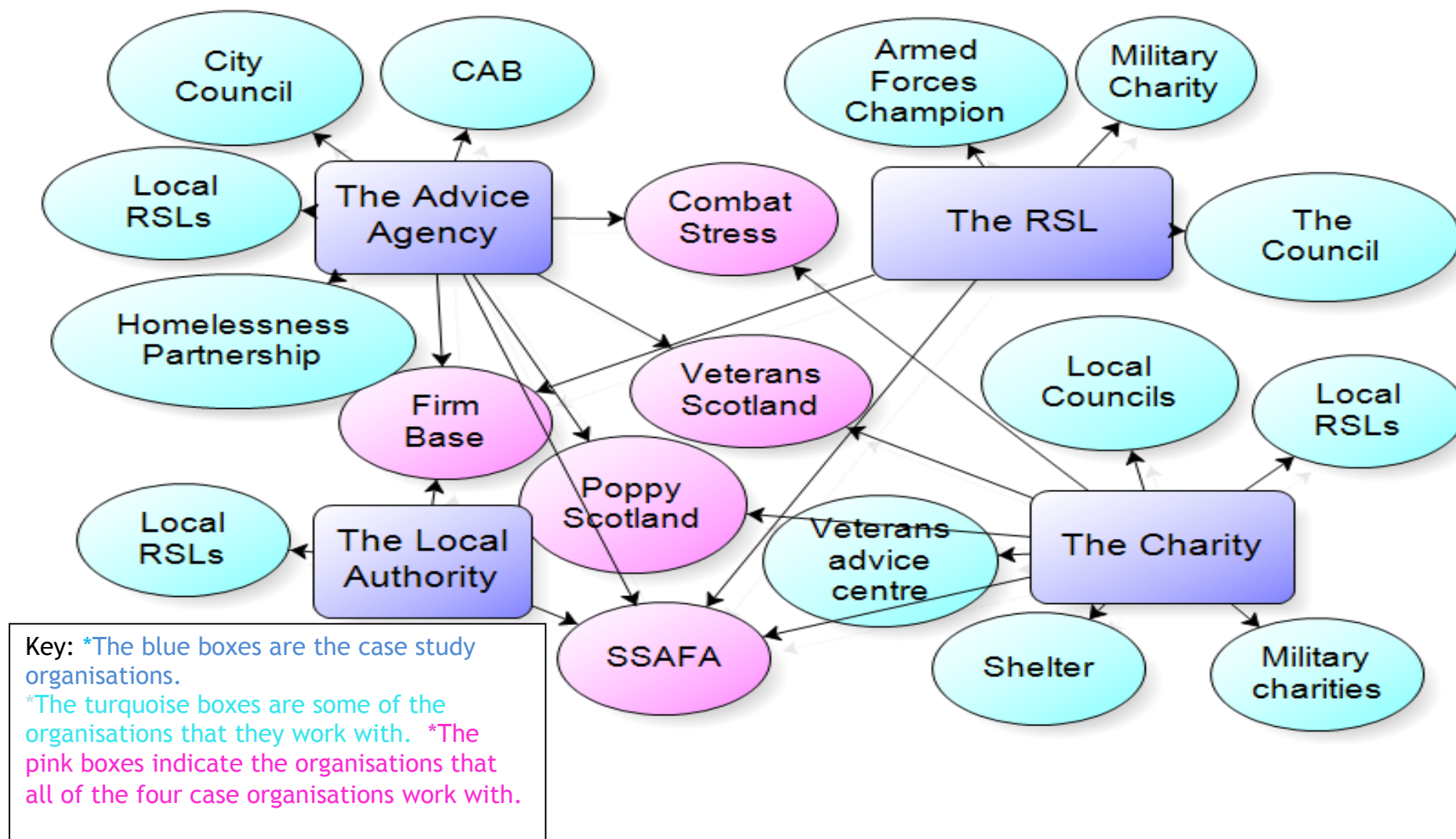
Network theory focuses on the issue of power and this, in turn, gives an additional insight into modern government and the nature of governance (Rhodes, 1992; Hudson & Lowe, 2009). For this study, it adds a layer of understanding as to why actors and organisations pursue collective goals, while at the same time it illuminates power relationships in such networks. As described in Chapter Three, network theory sits at the meso level and, more recently, the literature on networks has begun to examine the micro level, but there exists very little empirical evidence here. Networks involve actors and these actors work with others, within a governance framework, and this results in diffuse, decentralised co-ordination rather than traditional hierarchical transmission of power. Commentators argue that this lacks legitimacy and that this many hands dilute accountability (Papadopoulos, 2007: 479; Davies, 2011; Rummery, 2006). It also raises the question of how

the state continues to steer and direct given the increasing complexity of networks.

The case study organisations involved in this research are geographically spread throughout Scotland. The purpose of this study is not to examine how they work with each other; rather it is about how they work with other organisations in their spatial area of operation. Also, some of the agencies involved in this study provide services for the wider community, not just for veterans. Therefore, the data is not entirely based on the experiences of respondents working on behalf of military veterans; some views are based on their general experience of collaborative working. Figure 7.0 illustrates some, but not all, of the institutions that the case study organisations work with to house military veterans, and it demonstrates the messiness of service delivery in networks.

The chapter is structured in two parts based on the original collection of the data. The first part considers what enables partnership working and the second part looks at the challenges to collaborative working. Towards the end of the chapter a deeper analysis is made of the significance of networks and about gaps in the current literature.

Figure 7.0: The messy and fragmented provision of housing services for military veterans



## **The benefits of collaborative working**

Chapter Three discussed how the benefits and challenges to collaborative working are not clear cut and do not neatly fit into these two categories as, in reality, they straddle them both, hence there is cross over in this chapter. This first section of this chapter will examine the benefits and what enables collaborative working.

Participants at the RSL generally thought that the strengths of working with others meant that it could provide a better service and that as an individual organisation it could not be a sole provider. Housing organisations no longer merely provide housing, but also a plethora of support for their tenants who often have complex needs, and this demands that they have to co-operate with other organisations to deliver such support services.

At the LA, all of the participants see the benefits of working with others as a means to access a pool of talent that can innovate service provision and reduce duplication.

“So having a range of partners gives us a lot of flexibility, as I say, it makes us generally more accessible and at the end of the day, even the drawn out process sometimes you have to go through to get an agreement, to be honest, it usually ends up being more positive than negative because you've, I guess initially is forced to take on other people's views.” (LA/3)



The advice agency and charity both identify the key strengths of working with others, highlighting how collaboration can provide a more pluralistic service delivery, including being able to access services that they do not provide:

“The partnership approach, if it works well, obviously means that you can access a huge range of different services, different approaches, possible different outcomes that are going to help your customer, and everybody’s unique, they don’t all have the same problems, they don’t all respond to the same solutions. So the fact that there are a huge range of different agencies means that you can try and access a service that suits your customer’s needs at that particular point in time.”

(Advice agency/1)

So there is quite a degree of consensus on the benefits of partnership working between different organisations that work in networks. The next section discusses how veterans’ issues enable such collaborative working.

A respondent who works with an RSL felt there were no barriers to working with other organisations because the issue of supporting military veterans was currently popular (RSL/5). Equally, at the advice agency, they felt that organisations were very supportive of veterans and found there were no barriers (Advice agency/4). There is now more interest in supporting this group (Advice agency/6). The current high profile of veterans' issues is seen by respondents at both the charity and the advice agency to enable collaboration. The advice agency highlighted that there is a lot of goodwill

towards veterans, but sometimes the agencies involved do not quite know how to support this group:

“I’m not aware of any organisation that really has issues. I’m finding now, certainly since Iraq and then Afghanistan, all local authorities are very aware of the veterans’ issues, whether it’s for political reasons or whatever, but I don’t care, it works, and I don’t think they will go out their way to make it difficult which they may have done in the past.”  
(Charity/3)

“The goal is always the veteran. It’s improving life for the veteran. We’ve always got to learn and evolve because the veteran, his need is changing. When we first started, the average age of our veteran was forty to fifty years old, it’s in its twenties now.” (Advice agency/2)

Most of the case study organisations identified that the current high profile of veterans’ groups enables collaboration. There is real commitment across the sectors to support this group. However, in two or three years, when there maybe is less interest in this group and budgets become even tighter, this may act to limit the willingness of organisations to work together.

Participants across the case study organisation saw the importance of developing sustainable partnerships, as in the future the issue may not be so prominent but, importantly, the needs of this group will still be there.

## Trust and commitment

As discussed in the literature review in Chapter Three, trust is seen as a prerequisite for successful partnership working, indeed it is described as the glue of networks (Hudson & Hardy, 2002; Rhodes, 2007; Ansell & Gash, 2007; Agranoff, 2007). A respondent at the advice agency made the following comments about trust, which perhaps identifies the nuances of trust in working relationships and requires further exploration:

“Trust that’s the key questions, that’s the biggie, is there trust? I don’t think there’ll ever be trust. Not complete and utter unrequited trust or anything like that, it’s always going to be guarded trust I think, at best. Yeah, there should be working relationships definitely, where there is the common aim and the common goal, and it all depends on what that is. There can only be trust if there’s agreed, I suppose, ground rules and limits. Well I’d say the main barrier I think is trust. I think trust and what’s in it for them I suppose is always the question that’s in the back of everyone’s mind ‘what’s in it for me?’ rather than ‘what’s in it for the client?’” (Advice agency/3)

The above quote is not representative of the data because it questions the notion of trust, whilst most other participants did not question this notion. Another respondent at the advice agency discussed how they felt that trust and communication are key to any kind of collaboration and partnership working (Advice agency/4). This, in some ways, contradicts the above quote

because they thought that trust required ground rules and there could not be unrequited trust; this indicates that trust has different connotations for different people, even within the same organisation.

One respondent at the charity made the following comments that relate to long term working relationships and working with key individuals, maybe more so than to the notion of trust:

“It’s trust, there’s got to be trust. And I think there’s certain partners that I do trust, individuals that I work with that I’ve known for years, and there’s one that just I don’t.” (Charity/2)

Equally, another respondent at the charity commented on how trust had developed with other agencies, however this quote relates more to working relationships and service review rather than trust:

“We need to feel that if we link someone into a service they’re going to get a good result from it, it’ll be a professional service for them. That comes through experience. I think in keeping the lines of communication open and the feedback from the clients, if they’re happy with it, did they get the results they needed, kind of thing.”  
(Charity/3)

Another respondent from an RSL, who works with the charity, commented on how the culture of an organisation (giving the example of the police) can be a barrier to trust and saw a lack of trust as being a big problem (Charity/8). At

the RSL, a respondent linked trust with good communication and having a good working relationship (RSL/3); again the notion of trust seems to have many different meanings for the actors involved in networks. What has emerged from the data is that trust is associated with many aspects of a working relationship.

At the LA, the following respondent links trust with being open with information:

“So I think, yeah, if you believe that trust is based on the ability to pick up the phone, the ability to be called to a meeting and discuss quite openly issues, and share information.” (LA/4)

Another respondent at the LA discussed the benefit of mature partnerships and saw it as not being about trust, but rather about understanding each other's role:

“But I think... it's not about trust, I think it's about understanding, you know, each other's roles and I think over the years what we've managed to do is come to that situation where we understand that although you maybe don't agree, you understand why we have to do that and we're the same and we know what kind of organisation you are, and we've managed to do that quite well now I think. I think it's taken a bit of time but we certainly don't have the flare ups like we did in the early days, I mean, a couple of years ago it was almost a

‘them and us’ in the partnership and I think you have to go through that initiation process...” (LA/2)

The advice agency, as a relatively new organisation, does not have trust relationships built up through years of working with others. However, it feels that it has gained trust by reaching out to existing organisations, both statutory and charity, and realises that this requires continuing effort (Advice agency/6).

Klijn (2008) describes how trust is frequently mentioned in collaborative working, but the concept or meaning of trust is not studied. Williams (2012: 49) argues that power can be hidden behind the facade of trust and this feeds into communication between different actors with differing objectives. Stoker (2000) states that “trust on which governance arrangements often rely may prove too weak to carry the burden of it”. So the findings here also hint that trust is beginning to be questioned, as in some literature.

To summarise, this section found that trust and the meaning of trust is under conceptualised and thus superficially applied. The data suggests that some respondents considered trust to be essential for working with others, but one respondent questioned whether ‘complete and utter unrequited trust’ was ever possible and, as they suggested, ‘guarded trust’ was probably more appropriate and that forming trust was to them the ‘biggie’. This respondent understood the superficial notion of trust in relationships and had considered the multi-faceted nature of trust, whilst others said there always had to be

trust in effective collaboration. When examining the language used in the interviews, trust was used to describe understanding, commitment, competency, knowing the individual, relationships, compromise, professionalism and other attributes, therefore the umbrella term of trust acts to limit a deeper understanding of the boundary spanners' relationships. This is partly because the literature on collaboration is mostly based on structural elements, for example, organisational boundaries, rather than agency or a deeper explanation of the meaning of trust in this context.

This section now looks at commitment in partnership working where trust again crops up as an explanation for this particular attribute.

Hudson & Hardy (2002) identified commitment as being necessary for partnership working. Commitment is apparent at the LA as it has long established partnerships and it sees that this enables joint working; however, to get to this place it has “gone through this sort of baptism of fire, they’ve been through the hard processes” (LA/2). This respondent went on to explain that some of the organisations that the authority works with have developed over the years from community initiatives, unlike some councils whose partners work on a contractual basis. At the LA, a level of commitment is seen as being essential to partnership working.

A participant at the LA discussed the willingness to engage in partnership working. The quote below links to commitment, and demonstrates that a

lack of commitment is related to actors protecting their own boundaries and this is where partnership working fails:

“Some of it’s about setting the tone... some of it’s about the genuineness of the engagement and if... and that probably comes from the most senior levels within the partnership as well, is there a genuine desire to commit to partnership working and wherever that takes you, or is there a more ambivalent approach which is about almost protecting your own boundaries and your own responsibilities at the same time as engaging.” (LA/6)

Another participant at the LA felt that established relationships enabled joint working, thus reducing conflict and encouraging compromise, although they highlighted that most of the organisations obtained funding from them and this could be seen as the main reason for compromise.

A respondent at the RSL (RSL/4) explained how they have to work with the council because it is they that have the statutory obligation to house people. However, as the council has no housing, it needs to work with the RSL to meet this statutory obligation. Again, this fits with Hudson & Hardy’s (2002: 54) ‘fragmentation of service responsibilities across agencies’. This participant stated that when you work with other agencies for the same goal or commitment, you generally get a better outcome.

At the advice agency, respondents comment on how working together takes commitment and illustrate that the principles of collaboration between



organisations may be agreed on paper but what happens in practice may not entirely mirror these principles:

“You can't assume that, you know, you have one meeting and everything's going to be hunky dory in the future. You do have to keep working away at it, so obviously the organisations, particularly now working with regularly, you know, want to feedback. Where my customers upset the agency they've been working with, I do try and repair that damage as quickly as possible, in housing. The commitment and trust, yeah, and to some extent you've got to build that. It doesn't happen naturally and you've got to keep working at maintaining it.” (Advice agency/1)

A respondent at the advice agency explained how one of the key aims of the organisation is to harness all the charities that are working in the city, not to undermine them or devalue them, but to bring them together in partnership. This participant went on to describe how the advice agency has successfully engaged with other partners because they assured other organisations that they were not in competition with them, and they promoted working relationships with others. This relates to Hudson & Hardy's (2002: 54) description of successfully overcoming barriers such as 'professional self-interests and autonomy'. This is illustrated by another participant at the advice agency commenting on how they make referrals to other agencies to enhance the service users' experience.

Working under the same roof as, or sharing the same training and IT with, staff in different organisations is seen as one way to promote working together (LA/4). At the charity, the benefits of the Firm Base Initiative to enable working with others were identified:

“The Firm Base meetings which have started up, and that’s bringing all the social work departments and housing departments all under one meeting once every quarter, and we try to encourage them to get more involved with veterans’ issues, which they do. It’s early days yet, but it does. So I think the coming together is lifting the veterans’ awareness, we can do so much within ex-service charities, but we need to link into a housing association.” (Charity/3)

A respondent at an RSL commented as follows about the Firm Base Initiative:

“There’s a massive level of trust within the group (Firm Base) because we basically deliver the actions that we’ve said we’re going to deliver.”

“I know if I asked one of the people on the group to take forward an action, I know they’ll take it forward.” (RSL/5)

Equally, the LA identified the Firm Base Initiative as a key mechanism in the application of the Military Covenant, as the covenant itself does not spell out very much in terms of responsibilities (LA/3).

## Formalising collaborative working

Formalised procedures are seen as both a barrier and enabler within the context of collaboration. At the LA, a respondent discussed how contractual agreements could limit working together:

“Usually imposing something is the last thing you want to do anyway because it rarely ends up being a positive process, whether it’s with staff or whether it’s with partners.”

“I would divide the two types of relationship, partnerships and the contracts. The contract’s much easier, you stop a contract, and you start a contract, and it finishes and it ends and that’s straightforward. For the partnerships, anything we do really has to be through negotiation.” (LA/3)

The charity has recently entered into such a protocol:

“We’ve just actually entered into a protocol with an RSL, who are offering us individual flats that become available and not having to go through the kind of process of the common housing registry stuff, and we’ve had a couple of meetings with them and, I mean, it’s really, really encouraging, there’s a lot of support out there for veteran services and trying to make these links. I mean, similarly with Shelter, you know, we’ve had nothing but real sort of commitment and support

and real positive working relationships, so I can't fault anything so far that I've come across, you know.” (Charity/1)

A respondent at an RSL (RSL/4) highlighted how they were having difficulty with their anti-social behaviour protocol; they thought this was because the protocol between them and the council was not clear about their respective roles. Hudson & Hardy (2002: 54) emphasises ‘fragmentation of service responsibilities across agency boundaries’ and relates to the messy provision of public services under governance (Stoker, 1998) and network perspectives. Similarly, a participant (Advice agency/4) at the advice agency commented on how they thought that protocols/formal agreements or service level agreements (SLAs) could actually be a barrier to joint working because it can be difficult to get agreement when negotiating protocols. They thought that working together has to be built on trust embracing good aims and objectives. They explained that it could be difficult to get agreement when negotiating protocols, and that it can take a year to formalise SLAs, thus limiting the early service to the client. They explained that once these agreements are put into a contract-like document by solicitors, partners become afraid of the material and they start to back up everything they have done with emails, which in turn highlights and further engenders this lack of trust. They concluded that ‘regulation can stifle innovation’ and that it can be liberating to take a risk without the shackles of formalities, trusting partners and providing the service. It appears that risk and trust, or the notion of trust, are integral to the concept of boundary spanners.

The advice agency sees the benefits of non-contractual obligations, but also the need for some sort of formal agreement:

“So I think the key strength of it is that partnership approach that everybody’s agreed. I mean, to me, effective collaboration is where you want to work with somebody, you don’t have to, there isn’t a contract, you know, nobody’s got a contractual obligation to work in partnership with each other, so to me effective collaboration is when you want to, and to what to there has to be a common bond, a common need of to say ... or a common understanding or a common aim and objective that you’re trying to achieve.” (Advice agency/4)

This respondent went on to say that the advice agency got buy-in from the other organisations from the start, especially at a senior level, and that they had a shared vision; this took longer to achieve but was necessary for partnership working. Had it been a statutory obligation, it would have taken far longer and trust would have been more difficult to achieve.

The common housing register is an example of an enabler and tool for joint working, but it also highlights the difficulties encountered achieving this aim. For example, a respondent at the RSL (RSL/4) explained how it was developing a common housing register and it was needed in the area, but there can be reluctance from other local organisations to sign up to a register that is ultimately controlled by the local authority. An RSL who works with the charity highlighted that it took eight years to achieve consensus and it

appears that this was only achieved by reducing membership of the network, with the likelihood that if more people joined it would throw a spanner in the works. They commented as follows:

“At the start, there were all the housing providers around the table, so you're dealing with lots of people, lots of differing views, you know, lots of things that are out with your control. I think now because it was just the RSL and the council, it was just the two of us, it was easier to move forward more quickly initially and then obviously, because we're the pilot, then other people will see how it goes and if they think it's worked well they might decide to join further down the line.” (Charity/5)

The LA (operating in a different geographical area) discussed how at least five housing associations had signed up to the housing register:

“I think key strengths would be that you're working together, definitely, especially for the housing register partnership, you're working together for the common assessment of the need of your applicants. It is a one to one-stop shop (sic), I think it benefits the applicants without a shadow of a doubt, and I think that's all our common goal.” (LA/1)

A respondent from an RSL who works with the LA commented on how compromises had to be made by all the organisations involved, however:

“I’d actually say joining the housing register has probably made us work closer with some of the other partners, and I’m sure they’ll probably say the same. So I think within the housing providers, I think there’s a far better communication and rapport now and that can only be a good thing for our customers’ cause, if people are talking together then there’s a better chance that the right property can be found for them.” (LA/5)

So far this section has considered what competencies facilitate collaborative working. The findings suggest that trust is seen as necessary for collaborative working, but there is clearly some questioning the nuances of trust as a concept. Also organisations have to be willing and committed to having shared objectives when working together. The Firm Base Initiative was seen as facilitating collaborative working, with trust again mentioned as being important to commitment.

In terms of the benefits of working with others, there is a general consensus across the case study organisations that they could not provide the services that they offer without collaborating with others. Collaboration brings diversity and encourages innovative approaches from both the key workers and the organisations, and this can ultimately provide a more pluralistic service to clients. Although commentators (Hunter *et al*, 2011; Sullivan & Sketcher, 2002) question if this type of service delivery provides a better service compared to traditional bureaucracies. Indeed, that may be the case but in the absence of bureaucracies, partnerships are seen as an approach to

ameliorate fragmented service delivery. As discussed previously in Chapter Three, Cameron & Lloyd (2011: 373) question whether the success achieved in supporting health pilots could be attributed to partnership working or “to the fact that something is better than nothing, whoever provides it”.

Formalised agreements take time and effort to develop and most, but not all, participants see them as necessary. One participant thought they could stifle innovation and trust, another thought that a contractual agreement could limit working together. Unexpectedly, common housing registers (CHRs) were frequently discussed during data collection and were identified as an enabler to collaboration, albeit this can take considerable time and effort to achieve, even when there are only a few organisations involved. Their popularity was odd given the consensus was that they involved giving up control, albeit it made it easier for service users to access housing. This demonstrates the difficulties encountered in formalising agreement between different institutions, in networks, which is strongly encouraged by central government.

So far, this first part of the chapter has considered what enables and what the benefits of collaborative working are; the second part considers the challenges to collaborative working.

### **Challenges to the blurring of organisational boundaries**

The overlapping themes from the partnership, governance and network literature discussed in Chapter Three are important for this section’s analysis;



they include the messiness of service delivery (see Figure 7.0), the blurring of organisational boundaries, power, autonomy, rules of the game and incompatible service provision. This section concludes with a discussion on networks.

The following quote, from a respondent at a charity that works with the RSL, typifies the structural difficulties identified by Hudson & Hardy (2002) as competition-based systems of governance that third sector organisations can encounter whilst working with the statutory sector:

“I think sometimes if you want to work with the statutory sector, they want to make it far too formal; reams of paperwork and you've got to follow this procedure and that procedure, and I think sometimes the people in the smaller voluntary sector think ‘oh stuff it, you know, that's not what we're about.’” (RSL/1)

This respondent discussed the difficulties encountered when public agencies want to impose their policies on smaller third sector organisations that do not necessarily fit with their particular values. The LA equally picked up on this contention, giving an example of how an organisation that it funded only housed young people under the age of 25; the council had an adequate provision for this age group, but required additional housing for the age group 25 - 40 (LA/3). Another example, given at the LA, was that a charity that it worked with evicted tenants much more quickly than it did, because it was less tolerant of some types of client behaviour (LA/3). This meant that these

clients required to be re-housed by the LA. The LA was, therefore, paying this organisation to house these clients, and subsequently paying again to have the clients re-housed in temporary accommodation. The LA respondent went on to explain that discussing these issues can cause organisations to become defensive of their approach and policies, but it does open up their values to scrutiny. In this instance, it may imply that the charity had to compromise their beliefs or practices because of the specific funding streams. Equally, the LA has a duty to protect public money, and therefore it was obligated to resolve this situation. These issues and tensions were not seen as insurmountable, however, it does require time and effort to resolve them. Hudson & Hardy (2002: 54) describes this as ‘inter-organisations domain dissensus’. Differing objectives of the organisations that work together was seen as a major barrier to collaboration, for example:

“We are a partner, who has to be mindful of what the needs of the area are, rather than the needs of a particular local organisation are, and sometimes that will run contrary to the interests of that local organisation. But by sitting down and trying to talk that through, hopefully we’ll get to a win/win at the end of the day. But no, I think some of the local organisations will see us as a dominant partner in any relationship, because we just are that kind of beast. Basically, it’s a big organisation.” (LA/4)

The LA discussed how it has the same approach as their RSL partners. However, the RSLs have more opportunities open to them to do things

differently, because of their governance framework, and this can mean that the differences have to be worked through. Respondent LA/1 at the LA gave examples of these types of scenarios, which included working to different policies and management structures:

“I think the issues are that we come from different backgrounds. We come from a statutory side which is about... a bit more black and white, it is about people but it’s also about process and it’s also about guidance and it’s about legislation, whereas the other side comes from a much more flexible way of working and they can do things more flexibly and it’s all about... we are person-centred but they are very person-centred.” (LA/2)

The above quote demonstrates that the LA respondent could see an opportunity to capitalise on the strengths of actors from other sectors. Another respondent at the LA (LA/6) felt that sometimes they spent a lot of time arguing across organisational boundaries, and that it can become problematic and unproductive. The data reveals how participants assumed the role of ‘boundary spanners’ relating to the work of Williams & Sullivan (2010) and Williams (2012), as discussed in Chapter Three. Hudson & Hardy (2002: 54) identify this in their framework as “non-coterminosity of boundaries”. Respondents found:

“The barriers are your organisational boundaries, the responsibilities and accountabilities, that you have in relation to that both financially and in terms of the primary objectives of the organisation, and how

well or otherwise they fit with the partnership setting that you're working in.” (LA/6)

Another respondent at the LA highlighted the incompatibility of decision making between organisations, resulting in a slowing of the overall decision making process.

Whilst it was acknowledged that the strengths far outweigh the weaknesses, another respondent at the LA felt that partnership working could end up in endless discussion ‘paralysis by analysis’ and that partnership working requires a less rigid response, but this risks nothing happening because the responsibilities remain with the lead organisation, so there was risk of failure and lack of regulation and clarity as to who was responsible for what.

“There can be a kinda (sic) sense that if you take risks in partnership and you are prepared to invest in that, some of the lines of accountability and responsibility are a bit less clear. And when that works well, that's definitely a risk worth taking. I suppose if you've too many failures then you become risk adverse.” (LA/6)

This connects with the discussion on accountability examined in Chapters Two and Three, indicating that the dilution of responsibility, as a consequence of governance and networks, appears to raise an issue of accountability. A respondent at the charity thought:

“Different cultures within organisations are quite hard to work with, and you have to be the sort of person that's really quite flexible.”

(Charity/6)

The above quote correlates with Hudson & Hardy's (2002: 54) framework category of professional/cultural in relation to “differences in ideologies and values”. It also relates to how some actors are more skilled than others at being able to adapt to different modes of governance evident in networks (Williams, 2012). Communication problems were also seen as a barrier to working with others:

“There can be mix-ups and there can be communication problems and, you know, you are sort of depending on other organisations to... I suppose you get an expectation that they'll do it the same kind of way that you're expecting and they might have a different practice, so it's about sort of making sure that there is communication and that everybody's flexible and open to the acceptance that other people are doing different things at different times. ” (Charity/1)

The advice agency felt that the barriers to collaboration were dealing with a myriad of different agencies, doing different things and having to juggle this type of knowledge (Advice agency/1). This again connects with the idea of networks being messy, complicated and difficult to steer.

In summary, the governance arrangements at the case study organisations impact on how they work with others; for example, the LA is a statutory

body, and as such, it provides a wide range of public services. In contrast, a third sector organisation might support a certain group, which the LA may not consider to be a high priority for services. This can lead to conflict, particularly if the third sector organisation receives funding from the LA. For organisations to work together, synchronising policies can be problematic. The third sector can be deterred from working with public sector organisations if the latter seeks to impose their policies on them. Albeit this can be difficult for the third sector if it relies on funding from the statutory sector. Partnership working thus takes time and commitment, and sometimes joint decisions do not get taken, rather they end up being made by the lead or at the individual organisations. This makes it difficult to ascertain whether genuine collaboration has indeed taken place, or if it is just an illusion masked by the complexity of the interactions between the agencies and actors involved in networks.

### **Power, autonomy and discretion**

The actors involved in organisational collaboration are seen as crucial to its success and some actors are more powerful than others. A respondent at the RSL (RSL/4) discussed that when they met with directors and managers of social services they talked about how services can be delivered in theory, but they thought that what is going on in practice could be quite difficult for the caseworkers to manage. This respondent went on to explain that barriers can emerge through a lack of understanding of the other organisations' roles and

responsibilities. The following quote resonates with Hudson & Hardy's (2002) framework with elements detailed as professional/cultural:

“As I said, people don't like to lose control. There's often some really possessive, in that ‘this is our role, we decide’ you know, even though actually people can't decide very much because it's actually bound quite rigidly by legislation, but it's obviously just a perception in individuals.” (LA/5)

This participant commented on how they thought that decisions taken at senior level can take longer to filter down and there can be resistance to change from those operating at street level (Lipsky, 1980) putting the theory into practice. The following participant shares this view, emphasising that achieving consensus can be dependent on the individual actors' competencies.

“But the enabling of joint working is a skill sometimes, I mean, you have to have that in managers; frontline staff need to have that understanding and board members, councillors and board members need to understand what different perspectives are, so there's a whole series of competencies. I believe that you need to demonstrate to enable good joint working/good partnership working.” (LA/4)

The data implies that at a policy/senior management level the principles of collaborative working are clear, understood and considered achievable, but the above quotes demonstrate that collaboration, at service delivery level, is

far more chaotic and thus difficult to deliver in reality. In some ways, collaborative working could be seen as a partial policy failure, as discussed in Chapter Three, with some commentators questioning whether working with others is any more beneficial than not (Cameron & Lloyd, 2011; Glasby & Dickinson, 2008: 27), with partnership working being the exception (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002: 35).

Ultimately, it is the individual within the organisation that enables collaboration, and some may not have the necessary skills or want to follow this objective. This resonates with the theory of street level bureaucracy (Lipsky, 1980), Hudson & Hardy's (2002: 54) 'professional self-interests and autonomy' and Williams' (2012) work on 'boundary spanners'. Also this next quote demonstrates the difficulty of working in networks, at the micro level, when there are a lot of 'people to juggle':

"I think with any involvement with other people it's always hit and miss, depends on who you get. We have quite a few agencies that we link into for various different things. The top hitters, I suppose, for housing are the city council; they can be quite tricky just because of the amount of personnel involved, I think. There's no one contact that we have, it depends on the housing officer."

"I think in terms of difficulties that means you have a lot more people to juggle, a lot more to keep in your head as a worker... there's also the possibility of stepping on people's toes and doubling up on the work." (Charity/4)



The level of discretion available to the actors in providing services differed between the case study organisations; this in some ways depended on whether they provided a bespoke or generic service. This impacts on how the ‘boundary spanners’ can apply their skills and tools, and their ability to work across organisational boundaries. Also, the type of service they can offer to clients differs, for example at the advice agency:

“We’re definitely here to deal with the clients on a one-to-one basis and support them as best we can, I suppose we have the advantage of that over, say, the housing officer because they have a lot more people to look after in any sort of housing association such thing. So yes, the aim is to provide a kind of personal service tailored to that client’s needs as best we can, predominantly by getting external agencies engaged that should be engaging with them.” (Advice agency/3)

In contrast, at the LA there is far more tension involved in applying policies, and this links to the autonomy and the discretion of the actors, and the type of service they can offer to their client. It also highlights the incompatible challenges of providing services between different organisations, and this relates to the structure and governance of the organisation and to the notion of joint policy making in networks:

“If you look at the way our housing register works, there’s not a huge amount of discretion within that, you know, you get what you’re entitled to, so that’s a fairly fixed process and that’s probably because it’s a partnership and it has to be, albeit that from what I hear around

me lots of times, particularly with policies and processes, they need to be more flexible and I totally agree with people, but the current environment we work in, it's not very easy to move away from that, you know, there are a lot of challenges about now, that's the problem.” (LA/2)

The LA emphasised that when running a large service they have to have some sort of standardisation and at the same time be responsive to the individuals' needs (LA/3). This reveals the differences between organisations that are obligated to deliver public policy, compared to the third sector, which, to a greater extent, can choose both their obligations and client group. What that means in practice is that the public sector policies and practices are more fixed, when compared to the third sector. The impact on third sector organisations, working in networks resourced through LA organisations, is that they have to adopt policies and practices developed and favoured by the LA. This relates to the next section which discusses funding.

The current financial constraints are largely seen as a challenge to inter-agency collaboration. For example, a participant at the RSL (RSL/4) commented on how they are currently finding it problematic working with social work regarding clients leaving care. They think the tension is related to social work staff being made redundant and the workload being left to just a few staff, which impacts on their ability to work with others.

Equally, the LA understands the financial pressures on the third sector and sees this as a barrier to collaborative working (LA/4).

“I think the financial restrictions on us that have crept in now are making it much more difficult, not just for us; our housing service has always been run in a partnership with the voluntary sector both in terms of homelessness, these are all with our funded partners, so we've always worked in that kind of way. Now as the money has started to dry up, we've had to take that money back from partners and from ourselves too, and that has the impact. So what you're seeing now is a... we still have all those partnerships running but you can start to see how they're starting to become more difficult to manage as the money starts to dry up.” (LA/2)

The above quote resonates in some ways with Hudson & Hardy's (2002: 52) financial category. However, the scale of the financial crisis and subsequent reduction in funding for public services could not have been envisaged when these categories were being devised. The LA can also see that financial pressures can enable joint working and again this is echoed in the literature on networks (Rhodes & Marsh, 1992; Smith, 1993; Hudson, 2004; Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002), with some organisations being more powerful than others based on their access and control of resources:

“So we have this dual relationship going with these organisations, the money side of things and the service delivery side of things and, as I say, I have to say we're finding our colleagues much more amenable to being flexible than they have traditionally, but as I say, that's probably not unconnected with the fact that they can see that times are hard,

money's getting scarce, so they probably want generally to be more useful to us and more compliant with what we're after than perhaps they have been in the past." (LA/3)

In contrast at the advice agency, it was thought that financial restrictions might inhibit joint working, but they found that:

"I was a bit worried that... particularly at a time of really deep budget cuts when staff are being paid off and everybody's really struggling, that there would be problems with people referring cases to us, you know, a kind of 'the client is mine and you can't have them' or that they wouldn't want to talk to us, but that hasn't been the experience, it's generally been very positive and we've been very open and sharing and, you know, wanting to work in the spirit of partnership, so I think that's helped." (Advice agency/1)

Respondents at the advice agency thought that the economic downturn may encourage joint working as organisations struggle and adapt to survive, and that they may become more inventive, through necessity. A respondent (advice agency/3) felt that some of the military charities would close, although they did not necessarily think that was a bad thing, given that, as the respondent noted, there were approximately five hundred military charities operating in Scotland.

"I think, you know, as I said, within the voluntary sector things are getting a bit desperate out there, with the budgets being slashed and I

think there's certainly some amount of jockeying for position, to secure funding for your own organisation. And I think the organisations are all aware of that, we've got a reasonable relationship, but undoubtedly, between each other, you know, sometimes there's a bit of a stramash.<sup>3</sup>" (Advice agency/1)

A participant at the charity (Charity/6) felt that a military charity they had approached was not very engaging. The charity thought this was because the organisation felt threatened, in that if they provided a similar service it could impact on their funding. This is again consistent with Hudson & Hardy's (2002: 54) notion of professional cultural barriers in relation to professional self-interest and autonomy; this category is also relevant to the next part of the chapter, in relation to military charities.

A respondent at an RSL (RSL/5) named a military charity and said there was in-fighting at the charity that limited its capacity to work with others.

Another participant at the charity commented on how, at first, they thought a report from the Scottish Government, which said the veterans' organisations have tended to work more for the organisation rather than for their service users, was a bit harsh, but they now think it was probably accurate. They explained as follows:

"A lot of these veterans' organisations have been around a long time, they have a history, they have a context in which they have emerged,

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<sup>3</sup> Stramash (Scots word meaning tension, disagreement, in-fighting)

but times have changed and needs have changed, but it's not always easy for those organisations to move on. And I experience what I've read in reports, that sort of gate-keeping almost, or kind of wanting to keep your clients to yourself and not necessarily wanting to kinda (sic) share. But that's not always the case, sometimes people are really appreciative and 'oh that's a great service you're trying to run, fantastic' you know, but it's not very easy. I was really hoping I could really work very actively with other veterans' organisations, but I'm not finding it easy at all. With some it's real suspicion, which is a real shame." (Charity/6)

This respondent then went on to explain that some of the roles in the organisations were taken by veterans, and while they saw the advantage of this, the disadvantage was that these people may not have the necessary qualifications or training for the job. They felt that veterans' organisations needed to work more closely together:

"There needs to be a will and there needs to be, you know... the barriers need to come down in terms of that kind of protectionism of your own space and your own organisation. It's frustrating, I wish it wasn't there 'cause (sic) I do think we could achieve so much more, and on the bigger picture side of things that I talked about, these organisations need to be able to work together on that; we could be achieving a great deal if we actually were able to work together. Hopefully that will come, things are changing and I'm hopeful that that

will come in time, but I suppose that's the frustration really."

(Charity/6)

This respondent said that when they have tried to access services on behalf of clients, barriers are often put in their way. Another participant at the charity (Charity/3) commented on how military charities still needed to work together more effectively, although it had been improved in the last eight years when Veterans Scotland was set up as a focus for military charities, effectively acting as an umbrella organisation to connect the network of charities.

The advice agency experienced the same contentions working with another veterans' organisation:

"We're working for a common goal, we're going about it all different ways and I think they can streamline them, they can have clear working practices and processes that would make it a lot easier for everyone. One of the examples is that we've not got a case management system, we will be getting one, but we went to a veterans' organisation that was using one and they wouldn't share it. And I just thought that's crazy, you know, this case management system really, really worked for them and we just wanted to know what it was so we could adopt it, but they wouldn't share it." (Advice agency/2)

Another respondent at the advice agency thought:

“There’s no joined up thinking, really. My perception of the third sector has been, and has been modified slightly, but it still seems to be very cut throat and very competitive and this, you know, protecting of or holding on to clients for the organisation’s benefit rather than the client’s benefit I think is a minus. Trust, as I said before, I don’t think there’s going to be much trust anywhere, but there’s definitely scope for co-ordination and I know, even throughout the city you have the various sectors split up and you have got the hubs and meetings where all the great and the good come together and discuss. So there is a better awareness of what else is out there. Whether there’s an understanding, and then if goes any further than that I don’t know, there’s definitely room for improvement with working together and working more joined up.” (Advice agency/3)

A participant from an RSL, who works with the charity (Charity/7), commented on how she contacted a military charity housing provider to offer accommodation to an applicant on the charity’s housing waiting list. The military housing charity would not engage with the RSL until a senior manager intervened. The feeling was that those who worked at the military housing charity were concerned that they were losing some sort of control. The following comments also suggest that there is duplication within the military veterans’ charities:

“Definitely. I mean, Veterans Scotland commissioned a survey to identify what organisations were out there in the third sector that



supported the service community and veteran community, and identified 496 in Scotland. That's probably about 400 too many".

"I think the problem is though that you do get splinter groups, so you can have, like, veterans' associations pop up because either individuals have experienced problems themselves and thought 'well that's not good enough, I want to do something about it' or there's actually a perceived problem and sometimes it's not properly researched, properly funded, and so you have these short bursts of activity and then people tend to split up and then duplicate." (Advice agency/3)

Again, the following discussion aligns with Hudson & Hardy's (2002: 54) category of differences in information systems and protocols. A respondent at the advice agency discussed how the lack of information sharing can be a barrier to working with others.

They also felt that the NHS was a 'complete black hole', however with engagement at a senior level established the Head of Mental Health Services is now a regular attendee at the Firm Base<sup>4</sup> meetings, ensuring the NHS is actively engaging with the issue in an information sharing context. It has taken a lot of work to get this powerful partner on board and is of benefit in terms of the NHS having a huge amount of resources that in the past have been difficult to access. A respondent (Charity/7) from an RSL that works

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<sup>4</sup> Firm Base (the MoD's Firm Base Initiative supports the Serviceperson and also engages with the community; there are 13 Firm Base community task forces in Scotland)

with the charity also commented on how difficult it can be to work with the NHS. A continual problem that they experience is people being sent home from hospital to sheltered housing, sometimes in the middle of the night. The NHS makes the assumption that someone will be there to look after the patient, but it is not a residential home so there is no one there to take care of the person.

Another respondent at the same RSL (Charity/8) discussed how they are finding it increasingly difficult to get information from the police; they felt that was because there was a culture of fear due to data protection and that the police were consequently terrified to share information. This participant went on to describe how at a meeting between the council, another RSL, the police and themselves, nothing was being said so it was a complete barrier to joint working. Overall, they had concluded, joint working in this instance was just an illusion being played out by the actors involved.

A respondent (LA/5) at an organisation that works with the LA saw IT as a barrier to working jointly. The organisation has signed up to the common housing register, which means it is dependent on the LA's IT system, and this can cause frustration when the system goes down, as it has no control over it. Thus even sharing IT systems means reduced autonomy for some organisations.

## **The complexity of collaborative working**

To summarise the second section of this chapter, it explored the challenges involved in working with other institutions, which proved to be varied and complex in this study. Individual organisational governance, cultures, procedures and policies all impact on their ability to collaborate. What became apparent from this study are the different drivers for collaborative working. For example, the advice agency's very existence depends on it making links with others. Also they do not have the same statutory obligations, historical policies (because they are a new organisation) or objectives that need to be worked through in order to collaborate with others, when compared to the other case study organisations. In contrast, the charity could provide a service without engaging with other organisations, but it is making new links with others to improve access to services that meet the evolving needs of their clients. The LA has long established partnership working relationships and could not provide all of the required services without collaboration, but it is relatively new at making links with the veterans' community. The RSL has established partnerships in its general service provision, and has made new links with other military charities and the Firm Base Initiative to provide services for veterans. These differing organisational objectives impact on interactions with others and this can cause tension that takes time to resolve and fit well with the messiness of service delivery as illustrated in Figure 7.0. The lead organisation in any network is generally determined by its access to funding, and it may impose

regimes on its subordinate partners that originate from legislation imposed upon them. This is an example of just how government now steers and utilises networks to deliver its policy goals and ambitions.

Many respondents in this study felt that the barriers were inherent in collaborative working; however, they felt that these challenges had to be overcome by compromising on certain things. For some individuals, working through these barriers is part of their day-to-day work. This can take time and endless discussion, which sometimes results in a failure to progress, with the responsibility/decision remaining within the individual agencies. This was commonly mentioned by the senior managers of different organisations.

As identified in the literature, it appears that some military charities do not work with others, neither within their sector nor within the public sector. They seem to actively defend their organisational boundaries rather than work beyond them. This could be linked to the sheer number of organisations involved, as achieving collaboration becomes increasingly difficult the more that are involved. It may suggest that the evidence of duplication in the military charities is indicative of their lack of partnership working.

Current fiscal restraints are mostly considered to be a barrier to joint working in terms of staff cuts and organisations being more concerned with their very survival, rather than improving their ability to work with others. Some organisations may feel they need to hold on to clients to justify their existence, rather than refer them on to other agencies. Funding cuts have also caused tensions between organisations that work together, although at

times funding cuts may enable collaboration between organisations as they adapt and innovate to reduce costs. Overall, in this study it was felt that reduction in staff and organisational instability erodes collaborative capability. The next section explores the issue of networks.

### **Networks: the conduit for governance and partnership working**

Network theory is important to this study because it provides an understanding of power and how it is distributed (Hudson & Lowe, 2009). Governance can be interpreted as being about structures and policy making, whilst networks are where governance activity occurs (Börzel, 2011). Networks are associated with multiple linkages and are necessary for partnership working, linking state and non-state actors.

Figure 3.6 illustrates the overlapping themes between partnership, governance and network theories (contained in the literature review in Chapter Three) and their practical applications to the data collected to undertake this study. In Chapter Three, Dowling's (see Figure 3.1) five different types of networks were discussed. More recently, the emphasis has been placed on two types of networks, namely policy community and issue networks (see Figure 3.0; Hill, 2014). That said, the networks examined in this study do not follow the features of policy communities, although they do demonstrate some elements of issue networks in that they have less cohesion and lack a balance of power between organisations, when compared with policy networks. Also the structures of the networks studied differed. For instance, the main objective of the networks that had arisen from LA

involvement were in relation to service provision, with the LA controlling resources, thus holding the most power in the network and largely controlling the rules of the game (Rhodes, 1992; Stoker, 1998). This was in contrast to the charities in this study, who were more involved in knowledge exchange networks; these could eventually develop stronger collaborative working and networks.

Furthermore, the current literature on networks fails to capture the practice or micro level interaction within networks of the actors, and this is maybe because of the lack of empirical studies. Williams (2012: 4) reminds us that these actors work across multiple modes of governance, but some may not have the necessary skill set to be able to adapt to this environment. This study found the role of actors is crucial to the notion of networks, as is their capacity to work within and across networks. Given that some actors would be less able than others to compete, or play by the rules set for the game, this limits the capacity of networks and governance, and hence the actual delivery of public services. However, as argued by Cameron & Lloyd (2011: 373) regarding partnership working, 'something is better than nothing', and the same goes for these networks. This finding is also relevant to the work of Kickert & Koppenjan (1997) who place an emphasis on the impact of actors within networks and how networks in time change their working practices. In this study, actors were prepared to adapt or adopt new working practices to integrate with other organisations within their operational networks. This

was most apparent where actors were working towards operating a common housing register.

Equally relevant is the question of how networks impact on governance as a way to improve the quality of public policy (Hudson & Lowe, 2009: 1670).

Networks clearly exist in this study, but not in the way that the current British literature understands it. Rather, while governance provides an explanation for structure and the organisation of public policy, with networks acting as the conduit, the missing link in the literature is the impact of actors on networks.

This chapter has discussed how trust is seen by some to enable networks, although it cast doubt on its actual effectiveness. This was because it was found that actors had many different interpretations of what was meant by trust, whilst working with other partners. Given that trust is seen in the literature as the glue of networks, it seems that this human attribute has not been fully explored within the literature. As discussed, the personal capacity of actors differs, therefore their ability to work within a network context also differs. This study, for example, found that some actors had the capacity to see beyond their organisational boundaries and articulate the benefits of adopting integrated working strategically, whilst others failed to do so. Thus the focus should be placed on the individual's ability and capacity to act within the constraints set by the network, how they then use resources to

strengthen their own or organisations' position and how this impacts on governance, and hence the power of the state.

Networks are messy and chaotic, and this reality acts to reduce democracy and accountability in a public policy context. While the state is now seen to steer, rather than row, it still influences policy outcomes and associated networks through controlling resource distribution. Power and compromise are thus in the nature of networks and partnership working. However, some actors have to compromise far more than others, depending on their access to resources and the related relative power of individual organisations and their actors. Drawing on these findings from this study, two further features could be added to the issue networks as detailed in Figure 3.0 (see extract of features of issue networks Figure 7.1). These features are varying levels of integrated working and difference in personal skills, capabilities and experience of actors.



**Figure 7.1 adaptation of Hill's (2014: 157) features of issue networks**

<b>Features of issue networks</b>
Large and diverse
Fluctuating levels of contacts and lower levels of agreement than policy communities
Varying resources and an inability to regulate their use on a collective basis
Unequal power [Source Hill 2014: 157]
<b>Added</b>
Varying levels of integrated working
Difference in personal skills, capabilities and experience of actors

It would be interesting to explore whether actors with no financial power can overcome this disadvantage with high personal skills and capability to span organisational boundaries. This may link back to Stoker's (1998: 22) comment in proposition three, in that local authorities and their resources make them an attractive player but they cannot demand autonomy.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter thoroughly utilised Hudson & Hardy's (2002) frameworks on organisation coordination, together with the literature relating to collaborative working (Rhodes, 2007; Arganoff, 2007; Hudson *et al*, 1999) to interpret the empirical data. The analysis focused on how case study organisations worked with others and then reflected on the relationship with the key themes from the governance and network literature. Whilst Hudson & Hardy's frameworks assisted in the data collection and highlighted some new areas to study, their application did not adequately capture the complex interplay evident between these organisations in explaining their joint working. Network theory (Rhodes & Marsh, 1992; Rhodes, 2006; Dowding, 1995 & 2001; Marsh & Smith, 2000; Hill, 2014) was subsequently employed to address this gap, as networks are where actual governance takes place in practice. Governance, then, is seen as impacting at the macro level, whilst networks operate at the meso, and increasingly at the micro levels.

The actual extent of collaborations in this study differed between organisations depending on their governance arrangements, cultures, policies, objectives and type of service offered. Equally, the type of network differed with some focused on service provision, particularly local authority (LA) networks. The LA was also found to be the most powerful partner, given its control over funding. In contrast, the charities were more involved in newer networks that were primarily involved in knowledge exchange, although such networks could well develop into a higher level of collaboration. Among the

case study organisations, there was considerable consensus on the benefits of working with others and this included being able to provide a wider range of services for their clients and engage in a greater diversity of approaches. The current high profile of veterans' issues engenders willingness for organisations to work together for this group. The Firm Base Initiative is seen as a vehicle to facilitate the local community covenant by making links between the military and civil community. In this study, it also appears to enable partnership working across the case study organisations.

Most practitioners see barriers as inherent in collaborative working. They also noted that the process of working through these barriers requires compromise, opens actors and their organisations up to scrutiny and can also reduce their discretion. The last chapter focused on organisational boundaries and the associated requirement to work in partnership to bridge such boundaries. However, the benefits of partnership working as a policy objective were said to be far more difficult to achieve in practice. This chapter confirms this assumption, providing empirical evidence highlighting the tensions between actors and organisations in their quest to work with others. Senior managers question the benefit of partnership working by stating how the activity can become a round of endless discussions, creating the impression that joint working is taking place, although in reality it is not achieving viable outcomes. Additionally, they question who actually takes responsibility when things go wrong in partnerships because of the diluted nature of the decision making process. So there is always conflict here.

Whilst many saw these to be the challenges of collaboration, most thought the eventual benefits outweighed the difficulties, if they could be overcome. The literature on networks places emphasis on the need for trust. However, as a concept, trust is a misused notion to describe complex relationships in networks. It appears that trust is frequently used as a catch all term to describe other attributes such as professionalism, competency, familiarity with the different actors and commitment. Equally, the current emphasis on two types of networks - policy communities and issues networks - fails to properly recognise the diversity within networks and the actual impact of actors on networks. In this study, the networks observed could best be described as practice and knowledge exchange networks. Thus the current network literature lacks micro or practice level explanation and, given that actors and their ability to interact in networks is crucial to their success, and to the delivery of public policy, this is an area that would benefit from deeper and more critical scrutiny.

Whilst links have been made between agencies to improve housing outcomes for military veterans, overall service delivery is still highly fragmented and inconsistent, relying too much on the skills, initiatives and capabilities of 'boundary spanners'. An example of this provided in this chapter was that an important partner, the NHS, was only brought on board after the intervention of a senior manager. As a strategy, partnership working was found to be inconsistent and cannot completely resolve the issue of service fragmentation delivery under governance. What has also become apparent for these case study organisations is that there is not one singular model to support, or

collaborate with, others to provide housing services for veterans. This is probably the pattern throughout Scotland. This finding thus adds credence to the necessity of the Firm Base Initiative as a vehicle to enable greater collaboration between the charities and the public sector.

The next chapter is the last of the findings chapters; it considers housing services focusing on veterans as the user group.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **CAUSALITY FROM CHAOS: THE VETERAN IN THE MAZE**

#### **Introduction**

This thesis focuses on military veterans as a vehicle to explore partnership working in housing. Chapter Six considered governance, the associated fragmentation of service delivery and the policy/strategic drivers for collaborative working. Chapter Seven focussed on the practical implications for organisations and actors working together to provide services and this chapter discusses what this means for veterans accessing housing services. It introduces and analyses the data collected from this study's online survey of military veterans (who have left the armed forces in the last ten years, and settled in Scotland), relating to their housing experiences.

This chapter is structured in two parts; based on service provision before an individual leaves the armed forces and after. Consideration will be given to the MoD's resettlement service, which provides housing advice for those leaving the armed forces. In the absence of a case study of the MoD's resettlement service a critique was made of the information on their website. The chapter then examines the specific issues and characteristics of vulnerable veterans; it considers social housing production and consumption, and continues with the theme of organisational collaboration by providing a veteran's perspective on this activity. It concludes that new initiatives are

helping veterans access housing but that service provision is not standardised throughout Scotland and veterans struggle to negotiate the system.

### **MoD resettlement services**

This section examines the MoD's resettlement service, and then considers service users' and practitioners' perceptions of this service. Prior to leaving the armed forces, personnel are entitled to use the MoD resettlement services. This research would have benefited from a case study of this service to provide a more complete picture, however access was not granted. The MoD's website details its resettlement policy; in brief, those who have served four or more years can take full advantage of a two-year resettlement package and this links leavers into the career transition partnership (CTP). The aim of this partnership is to help those leaving the armed forces to make a successful transition into a civilian job (MoD, 2012a).

Those who have been medically discharged can delay their resettlement or "in extreme cases, resettlement provision may be transferred to the spouse of the service leaver" (MoD, 2012a). Early service leavers (those identified in the literature review as most at risk from social exclusion) "are directed or signposted to the help and guidance that they can receive from other government departments and ex-service welfare organisations and charities" (MoD, 2012a). "All early service leavers will be given a comprehensive resettlement brief and a detailed one to one interview by an officer, or someone with equivalent status, at unit level" (MoD, 2012a). If there are

accommodation issues, contact is made on behalf of the early service leaver with the Joint Service Housing Advice Office or the Single Persons Accommodation Centre for the ex-services and/or the ex-services charities, where appropriate (MoD, 2012a).

The MoD's Joint Service Housing Advice Office is based in Wiltshire, with a role to provide specialist housing information and advice. It runs one-day courses on housing options at bases in the UK and abroad; in Scotland it provides the course once a year at Rosyth. Under the homeless section on its website, it identifies 'priority need' categories (MoD, 2012b). As discussed in the literature review Scotland abolished the 'priority need' category on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012, now all but a minority of homeless presentations in Scotland are classed as entitled to housing, but the priority need category is still in place in England. This means that only certain categories of homeless clients, i.e. those considered vulnerable, are entitled to accommodation in England, whereas Scotland, having abolished priority need, has a greater obligation to house most homeless households. The MoD's website contains a formatted letter to guide those about to apply to a local authority for housing as a homeless household; the letter is based on the priority need categories and therefore does not take into consideration the Scottish context (MoD, 2013a). The MoD has developed a referral system that makes links with some local authorities and housing associations (Crown Copyright, 2013); during fieldwork at the case study organisation, this was not evident but it may be a new initiative that is still filtering through. In the absence of case study data








from the MoD, the next part of the thesis examines participants' perspectives on armed forces resettlement and housing advice. The following section examines data from this study's online survey, and it provides a veteran's voice on their experiences of engagement with MoD resettlement and housing services prior to leaving the armed forces.



### **Veterans and practitioners' perception of resettlement services**


This section introduces the online survey data. Figure 8.0 is an extract from the online survey (n=68) asking respondents if they received housing advice prior to leaving the armed forces. Question 8 illustrates that only 29% of online survey participants received housing advice prior to leaving the armed forces. One received advice from a local authority, four from estate agents and twenty from the armed forces' resettlement service. Question 10 asked respondents to rate the housing advice given: 50% rated it as poor or very poor. Two respondents stated that the housing advice was not Scotland-specific. Another commented that the advice was very general, and if you wanted specific information, you were advised to contact the local council.






One respondent who received advice from the local authority thought it was poor advice because they did not have a five bedroom property available. It could be argued that this was not poor advice; rather it was advice that did not meet the participant needs or expectations. Managing people's housing expectations will be discussed later in this chapter.

**Figure 8.0: Extract of responses from the online survey: Housing advice prior to leaving the armed forces**

8. Before you left the armed forces were you given any housing advice?			
Yes:		29.4%	20
No (If no then please proceed to question 12):		58.8%	40
I did not need advice:		7.4%	5
I did not get time off to attend the advice session:		2.9%	2
Other (please specify):		1.5%	1

9. Who provided the housing advice?			
MOD resettlement services:		n/a	20
Local authority housing service:		n/a	1
Housing		n/a	0

association:			
Military charity:		n/a	0
Mortgage provider or estate agent:		n/a	4
Private rented sector:		n/a	0

10. How would you rate the quality of the advice and information you received?			
Excellent:		4.5%	1
Good:		22.7%	5
Neutral:		22.7%	5
Poor:		27.3%	6
Very poor:		22.7%	5

[Data sourced from online survey 2012]

The online survey participants were then asked if the MoD resettlement services contacted any other organisations to meet their housing need. Of the twenty-three responses, the MoD had contacted another organisation in two cases. This is a crucial transition period for those about to leave the armed forces, but there appears to be a lack of collaborative working between the MoD and local housing providers to meet service leavers' housing needs. The next question asked if the MoD resettlement services had provided contact details for a local housing organisation; of the nineteen responses, five had received local contact details.

We now return to the case study data to gain a practitioner's perspective on armed forces resettlement. A participant who works with the RSL (RSL/1) commented on why they thought that early service leavers are more likely to have difficulty resettling. The participant related this to them being young, having difficult backgrounds before they joined the armed forces and that their circumstances would not have changed when they left the armed forces. This participant also commented on how long it can take to medically discharge the wounded:

"I've got a lad at the moment, he was wounded in service and nearly two years down the line they still haven't said that he's being discharged, he hasn't got his paperwork. If it's on medical grounds they say it's taking an awful lot time for them to get their paperwork through and they find that that's holding them up because they're in limbo, they don't know whether they

can start looking for housing, general needs housing or whether they've got to remain where they are.” (RSL/1)

Another participant at the RSL commented on how the feedback received from army veterans, about the armed forces resettlement, is that the service is poor. However, they found through working together with the MoD locally under the Firm Base<sup>5</sup> that:

“It’s quite a surprise to me because I haven’t actually worked with the armed forces at all, but they’re very accessible to help you, very willing to help you and really interested in what you’re doing and sharing information. They’re really excellent to work with, super.” (RSL/4)

A participant at the advice agency commented on the one-day MoD resettlement housing course as follows:

“One of the days is housing, where you go there and you get specific housing advice. It’s outdated, it’s antiquated and it is just not in the best interest of the veteran because you haven’t got every single local authority there that knows their area inside out and can give them specific information on the area they want to live in. In Scotland, that’s held at Rosyth and it’s the only

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<sup>5</sup> The Army’s Firm Base Initiative supports the service person and engages with the community; there are 13 community task forces in Scotland delivering these aspects of the Firm Base Initiative.

one in Scotland. The Career Transition Partnership knows six months in advance who's going to be there. By sending a letter out to a local authority indicating that people are going to be wishing to relocate to that local authority and could they bring in a housing advisor. Give them the housing advice that they need while serving to give them the best tools for coming out.” (Advice agency/2)

The advice agency staff felt that resettlement should be more strongly encouraged, if not compulsory, as they have a number of clients who have not done any resettlement. This corresponds with the findings from the online survey with veterans (Figure 8.0). One of the reasons given for non-engagement with resettlement services is not being given time off to attend. The respondent went on to say:

“As soon as they sign off, somebody needs to manage them out because they can be coming out from abroad and it's very, very hard... and the MoD policies are superb. They give the guys extra warrants<sup>6</sup> to come home, look for housing, but if they've no information on housing or they don't take it, this is where the middle managers should assist them.” (Advice agency/2)

Other respondents at the advice agency commented:

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<sup>6</sup> Covering travel costs

“The quality of provision of information that the MoD gives prior to leaving, and in our limited experience so far, the policies are there, the processes are there, the procedures are there, but they're not getting actioned properly, they're not getting managed properly. And that is not a fault of the MoD as a whole, that's more a fault of individual line managers, so the platoon sergeants, the platoon commanders, the company commanders, the company sergeant majors or whoever's been allocated the responsibility of managing the exit of people for whatever reason. There's still a personal responsibility on the individuals, they cannot shrug that responsibility and, at the end of the day, they should all be old enough and wise enough ideally to manage their transition out and I believe the vast majority of people do, you know, 95%/98%, who knows, do manage that.” (Advice agency/3)

“I've got a lot of sympathy for the armed forces in this because there is a lot that they can do, there's a lot that they do for people leaving the services, but they can't do everything. Certainly the armed forces do a lot more for people leaving than other employers do, the very fact that they put a lot of effort into people who are leaving just at the end of an engagement, at the end of a contract, no other employer to my knowledge does anything for people who are leaving at the end of a contract. Because of the completely different nature of armed forces service, it's absolutely right that they should be doing that, but you know, coming back to... they can't do everything. A lot has to be down to the individuals and certainly when I was involved with resettlement I spent a lot of time stressing to people that I was seeing that

the ultimate responsibility was their own, they had to be the ones who were resettling themselves.” (Advice agency/6)

A respondent at the charity commented as follows:

“I think the resettlement service should be mandatory for those people that are struggling to go on, and the military know who are struggling ‘cause (sic) they’re reported on once a year, they know the guys that are going to be a problem. Now they can order them to go to resettlement and they have to attend; whether they absorb what they’re given is a debatable thing. So I always think that the resettlement thing is shutting the bar and going after the horse has bolted. So I think the resettlement needs to be a bit more realistic; it’s not just getting them the last six weeks and training to be a bricklayer or pointing them towards that, I think we need to look at his resettlement all the way through the service career.” (Charity/3)

Another respondent who works with the charity commented as follows:

“It’s been tricky because resettlement have to take some responsibility for where the guys go to and we don’t want to step on their toes, but if it’s a vulnerable client then the sooner we get involved the better and I think there needs to be a handover period as well where the two services are involved so it’s continuous care.” (Charity/4)



A respondent from an organisation that works with the charity commented on making links with resettlement services, as follows:

“Because there are lots of different resettlement teams across the board, so it’s more about linking in with them and making sure they’re aware of our service and what we do, it’s also about adjusting how we work as well because we are for veterans, we’re, we work with family members as well of course, but in terms of the actual service user for a time we would only see someone if they were a veteran, if they had been discharged and that was it, because resettlement was there basically, but as time has gone on, it has been highlighted that there is a need for a cross-over there and waiting until they’re out often isn’t the best option. And in terms of resettlement, the ones that we’re getting through a lot more are the people who have been in married quarters, for example, and as soon as they’re discharged they’re not allowed to stay there anymore so they need a property, but they’re not getting the answers they need from resettlement.” (Charity/4)

“I sometimes think there’s maybe a stigma about resettlement that the clients don’t really engage with it because they don’t see it as necessary or maybe it’s seen as a weakness or they should be able to cope so they just leave and that’s it. Whereas, personally, I’ve found if somebody is due to leave the forces and they’re in that resettlement procedure, it’s a simple case of referring them back to the resettlement officer and they’re more than happy to help.” (Charity/4)

A respondent at the advice agency suggests the following:

“The ideal would be that we got adequate notification of every service leaver. They applied to us six months before they were leaving, or at the first possible opportunity when they knew, and that we helped them do all the paperwork and we get everything lodged so that by the time they come out they have a house. Now we have actually managed that in a few cases, even with only a month’s notice, somebody being discharged from Colchester<sup>7</sup> for example. We have actually managed to have a property waiting and a set of keys, the guy came up from Colchester on the Saturday, was put up in a B&B by the army welfare officer.” (Advice agency/1)

It was also felt that the information on housing, or indeed welfare benefits, should to be provided by a professional. To improve and make this service specialised, a participant at the advice agency said:

“They need a civilian in there; they need a qualified Welfare Rights Officer who has got a housing background. Again this would be very much geographical and it would be in the regimental home, for instance, so if you had 4th Scots for instance who are predominantly the Highland Battalion, I would like to think that they would look at getting maybe a Welfare Rights Officer or a housing specialist from the Highlands and Islands, you know. I know that is the gold plated solution, but there is nothing wrong with

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<sup>7</sup> Colchester is a large garrison town and the Army’s jail is located there.

someone trained to do that job, because, as you know yourself, the welfare staff don't deploy anywhere, they stay in the barracks, you know, so you could employ a civilian to do that." (Advice agency/2)

So far this chapter has detailed MoD resettlement procedures using documentary evidence from the MoD's website, an online survey of military veterans and qualitative data from interviews with participants from case study organisations. Of notable absence is a case study with the MoD resettlement services. However, it is evident from documentary analysis that although the MoD state that it's housing advice is a specialist service, in practice it is unlikely to meet this objective. One of the reasons for this, and relevant to this study, is that their housing advice does not take into account the Scottish legal framework. Its joint housing advice centre is based in Wiltshire; it provides a housing advice course in Scotland once a year, which does not provide area-specific guidance. However, there is evidence of innovation and good practice in the provision of resettlement services, for example medically discharged personnel, in extreme cases, may have their resettlement package transferred to a spouse.

The section considered veterans experiences before they leave the Armed Forces, it found that, not all service leavers choose to engage with the MoD resettlement programme and some practitioners have recommended that engagement should be mandatory for those leaving the armed forces. A number of respondents felt that service leavers needed to take some responsibility for their own resettlement. One respondent felt that the

armed forces' resettlement service provides something that no other employer does, albeit they did feel this was necessary because of the unique circumstances of armed forces' employment.

There appears to be little evidence of the MoD's joint housing advice service working with local organisations to meet the individual housing needs of armed forces personnel, although post data collection the MoD (2013) does state that it is making links with local authorities and housing associations. If the MoD's objective is to provide a specialised housing advice service, making links with those that provide housing locally is essential. The practitioners want to engage sooner with those individuals who are likely to encounter difficulties when they leave the armed forces. It may be that individuals need to take more responsibility for their own resettlement, but there is apparently some sort of enabling factor missing, and if this were provided, it would reduce, for some, the obstacles inherent in the resettlement process when leaving the armed forces. Additionally, the feedback from the online survey and interviews with practitioners suggest that there is a lack of professional housing advice available for those leaving the armed forces.

### **Veterans and access to social housing**

This part of the chapter will now consider the housing experiences of those who have left the armed forces and access to social housing. It will look at what originally attracted the researcher to this area of study, namely the over-representation of this group in the homeless population. It will then

consider the interaction between housing providers and veterans, the specific characteristics of some veterans, tenancy sustainment and then the theme of the study - organisational collaboration. Figures 8.1 and 8.2 are extracts from the online study relating to the homelessness experience of those who have left the armed forces. Figure 8.1 gives an indication of the housing issues that veterans experience. The findings are too small to generalise to the whole of the veteran population in Scotland, however the survey is representative of the general demographics of the armed forces; for example, 15% of the survey respondents were female and 60% had served in the Army. The Army respondents tended to be younger and had served in the armed forces for a shorter period of time.

**Figure 8.1: Extract from the online survey of statutory homeless experiences and length of time in the armed forces**

After leaving the armed forces have you experienced any of the following housing issues?	Less than a year in the armed forces	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	+26 years in the armed forces	Totals
Have you ever experienced living on the streets any time after leaving the armed forces?	0	2	5	0	2	0	0	9
Have you been accommodated in temporary accommodation such as a hostel or B&B?	0	4	5	3	1	0	0	13
Have you been threatened with homelessness (for example being served a notice to quit by	0	1	5	3	4	2	0	15

your landlord)?								
Have you had to leave the family home because of a relationship breakdown?	0	3	8	3	3	0	0	17
Have you had to leave the family home because of a domestic dispute?	0	1	3	1	2	0	0	7
Have you been living in accommodation that is overcrowded?	0	4	8	1	1	1	1	16
Have you been living in a temporary structure such as a caravan?	0	1	2	0	2	0	0	5
Have you been sofa surfing/ depending on friends and family to provide temporary accommodation?	0	5	10	2	4	0	0	21

Other	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
No Answer	0	2	2	4	4	14	3	29
Totals	0	24	49	17	24	17	4	135
								n = 39

[Data sourced from online survey 2012]

Thirty-nine respondents answered the above questions (some having experienced more than one housing issue, hence 135 responses), with those reporting most issues being in the age group 25-31 years, followed by 32-38 years. This would be expected as indicated in Chapter Four, as those who have served in the armed forces for a shorter length of time are more likely to experience housing difficulties. Iverson (2005: 175) relates this to those with mental health problems who are likely to leave the service earlier and are more likely to face social exclusion, including homelessness. Johnsen *et al* (2008) attributes it to Army personnel spending less time in the service, compared to their RAF and Navy counterparts.



**Figure 8.2: Extracted from the online survey - Incidences of homelessness and service within the armed forces**

Have you ever considered yourself to be homeless?	Royal Navy	Royal Marines	Army	Royal Air Force	Totals
Yes	2	2	17	4	25
No	6	0	24	12	42
No Answer	0	0	0	1	1
Totals	8	2	41	17	68

[Data sourced from online survey 2012]

It could be related to the Army recruiting from a younger age and from a lesser educated group (Parliament, 2013). Figure 8.2 indicates that Army and Royal Marine participants more frequently consider themselves homeless. What is an interesting comparison is that thirty-nine respondents (Figure 8.1) would have been termed as statutory homeless, but only twenty-five (Figure 8.2) considered themselves to be homeless. This gives an indication of the hidden homelessness problem and the difficulty in establishing reliable homeless figures; it also links to the social construction of homelessness.

Consistently reported throughout this research was that housing was a major issue for veterans and, as discussed in the case study description, the advice agency seconded a housing professional because it could not meet the

unexpected need of over 60% of their clients presenting with access to housing problems. Equally, when participants at RSLs meet with other partners, access to housing is identified as one of the biggest issues that veterans encounter.

Most housing providers interviewed stated that they could not meet everyone's housing need, as they simply do not have the housing stock. Additionally, there is often a mismatch between the type of housing available and applicants, for example, the number of bedrooms or location of the property. Even when applicants have a high priority their needs may not be met or they could find themselves in temporary accommodation for a prolonged period (as discussed in Chapter Four, this can be many years). The LA has approximately 12,000 applicants on their housing waiting lists, just over 30,000 properties and a turnover of over 2,000 homes per year. A participant at the LA commented:

“The biggest challenge we have in the area is that there's... the demand for housing across the board significantly outstrips the availability. So we're unable to address need sufficiently in the area at the moment right across social rented housing, and so when you then play into that, a growing demand from the armed forces' community who may be relocating or maybe leaving the forces and returning to the area, given that there's a significant recruitment from the area, there's an expectation that we do prioritise

provision for the armed forces, but the reality is, even with that prioritisation, we've got inadequate stock to meet demand.” (LA/6)

“One of the challenges, I suppose, is around kinda (sic) multiple priorities and how you manage that because... and I suppose the way that's managed, coming back to the armed forces issue, having a focused mechanism for liaison, whether it's the Firm Base group is probably the closest we've got, which have a single focus on the armed forces. There's a recognition of the pressure on the armed forces and the requirement to identify suitable housing options for them, and that then bangs right up against there are another 12,000 people on the waiting list in the area, some of whom have got even more pressing requirements for their need to be met and we're struggling to deliver that, and it's a difficult world.” (LA/6)

Another member of staff at the LA discussed the difficulty in prioritising housing applications as follows:

“So I think the problem we're all facing is that even with priority status, even although your group or you as an individual have received the highest level of priorities, you're still going to have a long wait. No amount of policy or change is going to sort that for us, you know, I can write policy all day and take it to our allocation policy review group. But with the best will in the world, you know, we've met lots of times and some of the areas that we deal with just keep coming back, areas of policy, allocations policy particularly which are so difficult to resolve when you have those priorities but there is no

solution to them. So policy for us just remains a way to try and move things forward all the time, that's really what it is for us, it's not about necessarily changing things because this is what everybody, we hear, generally it's about there's an issue/there's a problem and get it through this process, try and figure out how we can change the policy to make it better for people. It doesn't tend to make huge improvements, there's not huge steps, you know, you're not going from here to here on one fell swoop, you know, it's a tiny little step you make through those changes. And I think that's part of the difficulty.” (LA/2)

This quote relates to the discussion in Chapter Four in that sometimes government policy intentions are inadequately resourced, but equally significant is that policy formation is incremental (Hill, 2005) and policy intentions can be quite different to outcomes (Lowe, 2004). Social policy has been less important to this study than originally anticipated, and this was because some of the organisations had clear policies whilst others did not. Also, the inelastic supply of social housing means that supply can never match demand (Lund, 2011). Therefore, policy development in this area is always going to be limited because it is never going to improve supply to the point where demand is met; it can only work incrementally on policy decisions, focussed on who gets access to the scarce resource. The following quote illustrates the point on competing demand groups:

“The homeless priority group which takes up half our stock right away, but as you start to drill down below that as well, lots of other priority groups within that that have got a call on it; you've got all the high medical groups, you've got the domestic abuse group, which is quite big for us, and then we've got through care<sup>8</sup>, you know, we've got lots of managed through care coming through the system, so there's a lot of priority groups in there, so the biggest challenge for us is when you look at that is, you know, how do you balance that in terms of policy, how do you actually make a decision which allows you to give something to everyone. I mean, we're trying to balance a better deal for young people through the through the care system against ensuring that we hit the 2012 statutory homeless target, and at the same time someone comes along and says 'look, we've got all these domestic abuse cases sitting with priority points, 100 points in the system, they need to be housed' but you know, I accept that but there's 50 of them and there aren't 50 houses to give people.” (LA/4)

Local authorities and RSLs are about to be given greater autonomy on how they use their housing stock under the Scottish Housing Bill (2013-2014) and this is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four. A senior respondent at the LA thought that:

“Fundamentally this is about responding to local need and we would argue that the council's best placed to make that assessment in the most balanced

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<sup>8</sup> Commitment to those children leaving the care system

way that it can, and you're always juggling a lack of provision and a need for prioritisation, and that the allocation system which we regularly review on an annual or bi-annual basis and take into account all the pressures upon it, including the prioritisation of the armed forces within that, weighs all these things up and comes to what we would suggest is the best way in which we can manage the variety of needs. So at the risk of some central legislation, again just in relation to, say, the armed forces, it would skew our ability to meet other needs locally.” (LA/6)

Interestingly, this view is contradicted at the advice agency:

“Some RSLs give priority points or it’s a needs basis and everything, some people don’t - some people give priority housing/some don’t, and I think to have a common approach to that, that would maybe be led by Scottish Government, to give people a steer, housing associations - what we should be doing with that, then I think that would be really helpful. But I think if there was actually a direction that came from the Scottish Government, from the top, about what we should be doing with housing in relation to veterans, because that need’s just going to get greater really.” (Advice agency/4)

The notion of managing people’s housing expectations is also implicit in an advice agency participant’s comment:

“Key words which I think people need to stop saying ‘veterans deserve immediate housing’; they don’t because it’ll just put public opinion against

them. They just need to be put on a par where they can compete into housing. They need consideration if they're coming back from abroad because we can't expect our guys to register homeless when they're coming back with maybe young children, a household full of goods - it's happened in Aberdeen and the young man was told 'once you're back, register homeless'. That's the bit that had to be managed. They've all got a vested interest and they want to help, a lot of associations just don't know what to do." (Advice agency/2)

Another respondent at the charity thought that the criteria for allocating housing to veterans with PTSD should be widened. They went on to highlight that:

"But, you know, there's dealing with that individual case but then there's dealing with the principle, you know, and you need to be working at both levels really to be effective." (Charity/6)

Another respondent who works with the charity commented as follows:

"I think there's a general feeling in the country, especially after Iraq and Afghanistan, that if you do your bit for your country you should get some kinda (sic) priority, and again I know it's not always so straightforward, but you know, when you see one type of person, shall we say, getting priority over another person who's served their country and done a lot." (Charity/8)

As discussed in the introductory chapter, there has been a growth in those housed in the private rented sector. The use of the private rented sector to house military veterans is discussed by a respondent from the charity:

“I’ve been reluctant to do that, I mean, if somebody wants to be housed that way then of course I’ll help them. I’ve been reluctant to do that because from talking to some of the guys, those tenancies have often been the ones that have broken down because of disrepair, the difficulty of getting the kind of support of getting together the goods that they need, you know, housing associations can sometimes help with that, local authorities can help with that sometimes, but in a private let it’s very difficult. It doesn’t offer them security which for many of these guys is a really important issue, security of tenure. Having to move around because a landlord decides he no longer wants to let his property is very difficult for them to deal with, so unless somebody comes to me and actively puts that forward as an option that he would like to consider, then I wouldn’t be pushing that.” (Charity/6)

This quote perhaps highlights the need for a service to help veterans sustain tenancies in the private rented sector. There has been no research on the use of the private rented sector to house military veterans. To meet the demand of housing military veterans, more links may need to be made with the private sector.

This section has examined the contentions inherent in allocating the scarce resource of social housing, with military veterans being just one of many competing groups. Public policy implementation is important in the delivery of services in areas such as health, education and housing. However, the lack



of social housing means that allocation policy implementation or formulation cannot increase the number of homes available, it can only make incremental change and guide on which groups should be given priority. There is no clear consensus among the case study organisations about whether the government should apply a top-down policy directive in Scotland to prioritise military veterans in social housing, or allow the decision to be taken locally. There is merit in considering priority at a local level, as services and outcomes for people in similar circumstances could vary across the country.

The Scottish Housing Charter consultation has the potential to give housing providers more flexibility in their allocation policies; therefore it seems unlikely that the Scottish Government will issue a top-down policy to prioritise housing for military veterans. This fits with the discussion in Chapter Two that, under governance, government now manages at a strategic level instead of at the micro level. This is not to say that social housing providers have autonomy from the state; what it means is they have limited autonomy to make local and practice decisions that affect the allocation of housing. This means that allocation policies differ throughout Scotland and this fits with the messy provision of welfare services under governance. Therefore, it would appear that the provision of social housing fits the governance perspective, in that it is not entirely controlled under hierarchical top down bureaucracy, as there are elements of bottom up implementation of policy.

## **The dichotomy between veterans and service providers**

It is now necessary to look at the particular profile of some veterans. It is important to reiterate from the introductory chapter that most people leaving the armed forces go on to make a successful transition into civilian life.

However, when veterans encounter problems they are often complex and manifold; a respondent from a charity that works with an RSL typified their problems as follows:

“I wouldn’t say a huge number, but a slowly increased number of guys coming in, not in a good state, who were veterans, common factors they tended to have was some sort of post traumatic stress. They had decided to self-medicate that problem with alcohol, which is usually common. The alcohol, coupled with some behaviours which associate themselves with PTSD, your sort of anger and mood swings tend to lead to family break up, loss of jobs, getting involved in fights, often winding up in jail and obviously the alcohol abuse escalates quite quickly to become a severe problem.” (RSL/1)

The advice agency finds that its clients have multiple needs and it applies a person-centred approach to meeting these needs. For example, if they are alcoholics who have no intention of stopping drinking, it will house them in a wet hostel (a term used to describe a hostel where alcohol is tolerated).

With drug addicts, it will look to place them in a hostel where their housing accommodation is not threatened by their continual drug addiction.

The comment below by a participant at the advice agency typifies the often complex needs of the general homeless population. Added to this is the issue of pride of military veterans (identified in Chapter Four), and this may be a barrier to them accessing services.

“You will normally get a veteran who may present with a housing issue, but very, very quickly you’ll understand there might be a mental health issue, there might be an addiction issue, there’ll be a debt issue and this is especially with the homeless guys, they’ve got complex and multiple issues. And to be honest, through their pride, through them being embarrassed, they won’t present all their issues at once, but you know there’s something there. So you’ll go through the flow chart, we’ll use our experience to start teasing things out of them and then that will bring in, for instance, the mental health flow chart, the housing flow chart, the addictions flow chart; so then you build it up into a complex case.” (Advice agency/2)

A respondent from an organisation that works with the charity to house veterans commented that:

“I’ve got a number of men that I’m working with just now who are not housed yet, but they really are on the chronic PTSD end of the spectrum. I don’t know how that’s going to work out because I’m trying to access specialised housing for them which is in very short supply, because with the best will in the world I don’t think, and neither do the staff here, that these particular guys would

survive in a mainstream tenancy. We wouldn't be able to give the degree of support... because for some it's 24 hours is what they need, for some it's maybe not 24 hours but they need to have somebody available at the end of the phone almost all the time, or quite a high level of practical support, like learning to cope with day to day paying bills and dealing with the stresses, 'cause (sic) you know, it's the stresses of managing a tenancy which, for some of the men with severe PTSD, would be extremely hard to cope with without somebody going in maybe daily to support, and I can't provide a daily service like that." (Charity/6)

This respondent went on to say that approximately 60% of the issues that their clients present with are alcohol related. As discussed earlier, and identified in Chapter Four, alcoholism is also a big issue for clients presenting at the advice agency.

A respondent (RSL/1) from a charity that works with the RSL and a member of staff from the RSL, talked about the suicide of a veteran they had housed.

This veteran had served in Afghanistan and had discussed how in the pub someone commented to him that they had been on one of the Xbox games, Tour of Duty, and done a patrol in Helmand. They had said it was 'awesome' and he was just looking at them and thinking they do not know what they are talking about. This demonstrates just how unique this group is, and how little understood they are by the general public.

The respondent went on to discuss how it can be ten years after an incident when PTSD commences. The charity had requested government funding to prepare for the years ahead because, as emphasised by the quote below, support is current but it might not be there when it is needed in the future.

“At the moment it might be fine, when people start getting bored, start getting drunk, start doing drugs because there’s nothing for them, there’s no job/there’s no house whatever to come out in, and it’s not just this area, it’s right across the UK, what help is actually going to be there? Because at the moment that support is there from the nation.” (RSL/5)

This current support was also reflected on by a participant at the charity:

“I think there is a lot of public sympathy. What that translates to on the ground is another thing of course.” (Charity/6)

Participants have discussed the high level of recent combat typically as follows:

“The level of combat these guys have faced in Iraq and Afghanistan, I think a lot of younger guys have gone out, you know, done a tour and thought [sigh] ‘I’m not going back there’ you know, understandably so. So yeah, I’d say obviously when the army’s not involved in so much combat then it’s a more straightforward career.” (RSL/1)

The possible impacts of this are discussed:

“I think everybody’s really, really conscious of this, especially ‘cause the gestation period for PTSD is 13 years, so you talk to people at Combat Stress, the people who they are now seeing, the first referrals to Combat Stress are from Bosnia, Sierra Leone, Ireland still, the first Iraq war. So in ten years time when they will have an avalanche of people from, you know, Iraq and Afghanistan, they will be forgotten wars, just like Ireland’s now a forgotten war.” (RSL/1)

Commentary from participants is rich in reference to PTSD. The participants may have been discussing clients that have a diagnosis of PTSD, or they may have thought a client had PTSD. However, none of the participants is qualified to make a diagnosis of this condition, therefore it may create an impression that PTSD is more prevalent than it actually is. Lord Ashcroft’s report (2012) examined perceptions of the British military by employers and the public. It involved large surveys of military personnel, employers and the general public. In March 2012 2,033 adults were surveyed online in the UK, and one of the questions asked was “How common do you think it is for former members of the Armed Forces to have some kind of physical, emotional or mental health problem as a result of their time in the armed forces?” Thirty-four percent thought it was very common, 57% thought it was quite common, 8% thought it was quite rare and 1% thought it was very rare (Ashcroft, 2012: 65). The findings from Lord Ashcroft’s research fit with the

findings from this thesis; it is therefore likely that practitioners over-report the incidences of PTSD in the veteran client group. Actual numbers of those suffering from PTSD is unknown and rates conflict (Sundin *et al*, 2009).

However Combat Stress (2014) reported a 57% increase in 2012-2013 of Afghanistan veterans reporting PTSD. Afghanistan veterans are likely to wait eighteen months to report PTSD symptoms, compared to thirteen years in the general veterans' community. This indicates that the picture on PTSD in the armed forces and veterans population is ever changing and unclear.

Interview participants discussed how some veterans do not want to engage with civilian life; one participant at the advice agency identified common non-engagement themes:

“They feel the civilian doesn’t understand where they’ve been, what they’re talking about, you know, feel they can’t relate to that civilian, although ironically people they see from Combat Stress are all civilian, are all ex-NHS etc, so it’s just that Combat Stress has a label that they’re to support veterans, that the veterans are engaging... it’s a bit like on the housing side with Veterans’ Garden City Residencies and Haig Homes etc, there’s sometimes a strong desire for them just to consider that option rather than the wider social housing options there, prove the fact it’s got the kind of veterans label. And even though... you know, probably financially it may be the best deal, but certainly the standards of accommodation and such like maybe not as good as there is in the rented sector, but that’s their call.”

(Advice agency/3)

Some have had little experience of civilian life, because they have lived in a different culture (military) with a different set of rules. A participant from an organisation that works with the charity commented on the stereotype of a veteran:

“I think in a lot of ways the veteran label has a lot to take responsibility for because it isolates the client, I think. Across the board in any agency that you go to, even with GPs, people see ‘veteran’ and they think ‘oh my Lord, I’m not quite sure what to do with them’ and they have trauma, how do I handle that?” (Charity/4)

This participant went on to describe how some services pass veterans to them:

“Because we’re here, it feels sometimes like we get a lot of the ones that people aren’t quite sure of, they’re a bit hesitant, they’re not sure what they’re doing, so they pass them our way, which is good, but I think it’s also something that needs to be looked at a wee bit more because in the end they’re no different to anyone else, they have the same issues, they just have a unique set of experiences.” (Charity/4)

A respondent at the advice agency commented that RSLs that had housed veterans expressed concern over issues such as mental health, depression and



post traumatic stress, and how should this be managed so the tenant could sustain their tenancy. The RSLs demonstrate a willingness to help this group but were concerned about supporting them, especially if they have PTSD. In response to this concern, the advice agency identifies what services are available locally and has the veteran registered with these services, ideally before they move into a tenancy. However, this is not an easy service to provide and the respondent gave an example of how the transfer time for the addiction services from one area of the city to another can take six weeks:

“So if you’ve got a guy who’s in temporary accommodation, he moves a lot, if he goes from one area to another, he’s got to walk ‘cause (sic) he’s always skint - and this was one of the incidents we had - he was walking across the city, ‘cause (sic) he’d a real desire to stop drinking, but it was making it easy for him to fail, just not to walk to another area. So we intervened at that stage and we got it... I contacted the head of addiction services and he got transferred that day, you know, and he stayed off the alcohol.” (Advice agency/2)

A respondent who works with the charity commented on how difficult it can be for a veteran engaging with services:

“No I think it’s because he’s been in the army, because he’s been at home, he’s joined the army where you’re literally told ‘do this, do that when I tell you’ and they’re not really trained to think for themselves, and he’s done his

three years and suddenly it's like he's been cast adrift and he's been put into a situation where he has to take responsibility himself and make decisions. He's capable of doing it but he just doesn't know what to do, he doesn't know what housing benefit is and he doesn't realise if he misses a signing on day his housing benefit's stopped, which means he causes rent arrears and he doesn't know that he's got to speak to his housing officer and all that, he just doesn't know." (Charity/8)

This highlights an interaction problem with services and the veteran and vice versa. Service providers are unfamiliar with this group because most practitioners will not have had military service experience; equally, the veterans are unlikely to have engaged with these services when they were in the armed forces. Those providing the services are aware of PTSD and trauma, but this in some ways is an unknown and services are wary of how to relate to and support this group. Equally, the veterans are perhaps having a difficult transition into civilian life and are reluctant to engage with the civilian services. This is illustrated by a comment from an organisation that works with the charity:

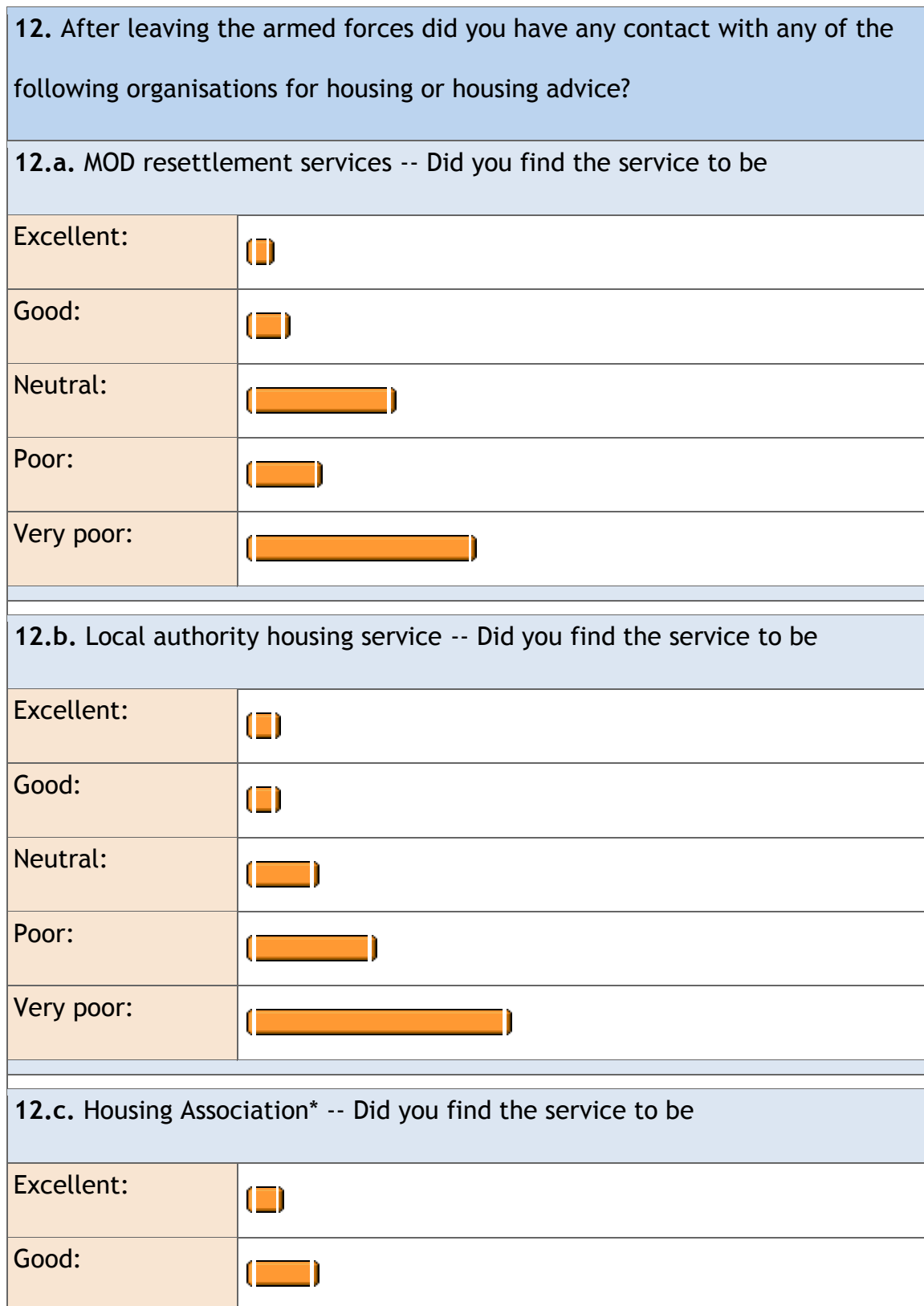
"But these guys see themselves in a particular way, they don't want to be seen as needing a social worker and I have to work really, really carefully with them." (Charity/6)














When it comes to service provision, a participant at the advice agency commented on how they felt that signposting<sup>9</sup> was not appropriate because the people they were dealing with were at crisis point. A participant at the charity also felt that signposting did not work for this group. Relevant to this discussion is the veterans' perception of their interaction with service providers. Figure 8.3 demonstrates that after leaving the armed forces, veterans' opinions on housing services with a broad range of providers were poor, but this data was based on perceptions over a ten year period and service provision for this group may have improved over that time.

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<sup>9</sup> Signposting - supply contact and information with the emphasis on the client contacting services direct.

**Figure 8.3: Extracts from the online survey - housing advice after leaving the armed forces**



Neutral:	
Poor:	
Very poor:	
12.d. Military charity -- Did you find the service to be	
Excellent:	
Good:	
Neutral:	
Poor:	
Very poor:	
12.e. Private rented sector -- Did you find the service to be	
Excellent:	
Good:	
Neutral:	
Poor:	
Very poor:	

[Data sourced from online survey 2012]

To summarise, when military veterans encounter problems they can be multiple and complex, similar to those identified by the literature for the general homeless population. However, veterans have the added dimension

of military service and they may be affected by PTSD. There appears to be an interaction problem between public services and veterans, and vice versa. This is largely a group unknown to social services, with unique issues; equally, veterans, because of their pride and being unaware of what services are available to them, may have difficulty engaging. This is where there is a gap in service provision for this group; organisations are willing to help but there is concern about how to support them, for example how does an RSL help a veteran sustain their tenancy if they suffer from PTSD?

### **Providing the sustainable tenancy**

The provision of housing services is about more than providing a property. For some tenants, they will require additional support to sustain their tenancy and this can involve many different activities, including accessing specialist services. A failed tenancy is a term used to describe a tenancy in social housing that has ended within a year. Tenancy failure places large direct costs on local authorities, which can include temporary accommodation costs, storage costs, possible eviction costs and rent arrears. Homeless (Action) Scotland (2011) argues that providing tenancy support is less costly than bearing the costs of failed tenancies. Failed tenancies are resource intensive and have a serious personal impact on the individuals and their families. The reason that tenancies have failed for some previously housed military veterans are described as follows:

“A lot of them have come from marriage breakdown situations so they've got no household goods, you know, or they've come straight out of the army and they've never had their own household goods. Now moving into a flat and it's empty, sometimes there's just no floor coverings, now the impact emotionally of that, I mean, it's hard for every homeless person, many homeless people are in that situation, but if you've got mental health issues and PTSD it's extremely difficult and that's the volatile time, and some of the guys who've tried tenancies before have said to me it was when they walked into their flat and saw what they had to live with.” (Charity/6)

“The men that I've got into their own tenancies, that's working quite well. Tenancies are being sustained; we're giving them a great deal of support in getting their things together. The difficult stage is the first three or four weeks, that's the really difficult stage. I'm able to do quite a lot to help support them with that process and I think that that in a lot of cases will be very successful.” (Charity/6)

An RSL who works with the charity commented on how a military veteran had struggled with his tenancy prior to the above service being available:

“He's clearly come out of the forces with some kind of stress disorder, whether it's related to action he's seen or whether it's just related to a period of service in the army, and we've housed him and he's basically closed the door and not responded to anybody at all. He clearly has some kind of stress related problem, but we're not set up as an organisation to try and identify

that or to help him. Unfortunately he's one of the ones that I housed initially with no tenancy support whatsoever and he did run into quite a few problems in setting his home up, and I think that would've been avoided had he had the expert help from day one." (Charity/8)

At the advice agency, staff realise that helping veterans access housing is not the end of their involvement; they produce individual plans that identify the clients' needs, which may relate to benefits or furnishing a property. The advice agency engages with organisations, for example the benefits agency, addiction services, Combat Stress and furniture initiative to enable clients to sustain their tenancies. The advice agency accesses funding through service charities usually in less time than it takes to access community care grants to provide essentials for making a home; this is an advantage over non-veteran homeless applicants.

"We did have 100% tenancy sustainment for everybody we've housed, which for people coming from the homeless sector is really, really good. I think we've got one now that's now given up their tenancy and went back, but I think apart from that we've had 100% tenancy sustainment which is really, really exceptional." (Advice agency/4)

A respondent at the advice agency went on to discuss policy in terms of people losing their tenancies:



“The policies are all very well and good, the occupancy agreement states that if you do this, that and the other we’ll kick you out, but reality dictates that hang on, there might be an issue and a problem here ‘cause (sic) that guy’s got a serious alcohol issue or he’s had two tours in Afghan and that was maybe two or three years ago and he’s come to us. In fact we had an incident recently like that and you have to take all that into consideration, so it’s never sort of black and white.” (Advice agency/2)

As discussed in this chapter, some veterans have difficulty engaging with services and these services are perhaps wary of some of the unique problems that this group present. The comments from the charity and the advice agency above demonstrate that putting in services and staff with skills to work with the specific needs of veterans greatly improves tenancy sustainment. Housing military veterans is not just about allocation policies, it is about developing services to maintain tenancies for this group. It clearly demonstrates the need for services beyond housing allocation, and that this type of service is labour intensive. The LA makes links with organisations such as SSAFA<sup>10</sup> to support this group. Equally, the RSL works with a number of partners from the public and third sector (both specific and generic) to provide a unique service for military veterans. These schemes are all relatively new developments and they demonstrate the need for these services. However, these schemes are not provided throughout Scotland. The consequence of governance and the fragmentation of public services is

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<sup>10</sup> SSAFA - Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen and Families Association, armed forces charity

that services are not applied equally throughout the country. This was expressed by a participant at the advice agency:

“There is a realisation across Scotland that something along the advice agency lines is needed. Now it wouldn’t be an exact copy in each authority because... the numbers involved are very much larger in this city than they would be in other local authority areas, and my own view is that rather than seeing 32 local authorities develop 32 different organisations, it would be better to have, you know, a hub and spoke arrangement whereby the advice agency as a hub was then supporting or developing in other areas funded by the local authorities in those appropriate areas.” (Advice agency/6)

Equally a participant that works with the charity commented:

“Many of the veterans have very specialised needs and it was recognised at Shelter that this was a client group that needed a specialised service. They’d received quite a lot of requests for help and support from veterans and realised that an in-house service would actually better meet clients’ needs.” (Charity/6)

“There was recognition that this was a client group that wasn’t really being catered for in any active way. As I say, we run housing support services for other homeless groups, but it was seen that this was a group who also needed to be part of that but needed to be part of that support system much earlier

in the process. The support services in other parts of the country that we run, they're often referred by social workers or by the housing provider themselves, whereas a lot of the veterans need help a lot earlier before they've actually even got into the housing.” (Charity/6)

This inconsistency of delivery is demonstrated in veterans' perceptions detailed in Figures 8.4 and 8.5.

**Figure 8.4: Extracted from online survey - which areas of housing services do you think require improvement?**

17. Thinking back over your experiences of using housing services, how could they have been improved?	Time since leaving the armed forces 0 - 3 years	4 - 6 years	7 - 10 years	Totals
More coordinated working together between the agencies involved.	11	3	5	19
The organisations need to have a better understanding of the needs of veterans.	13	7	11	31
There was a lack of clear boundaries of responsibility between the different agencies involved.	6	3	5	14
Too many different agencies made it	3	1	4	8

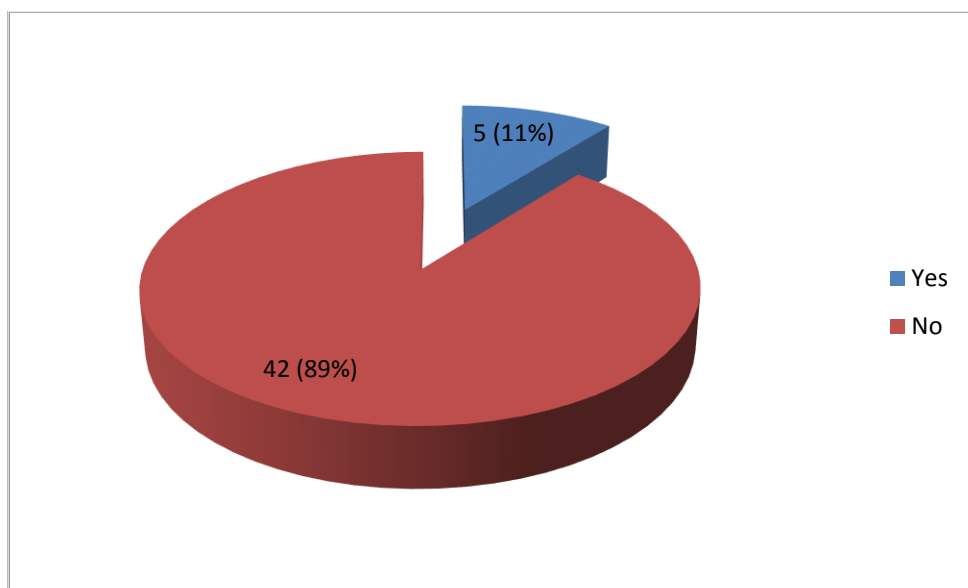
confusing and difficult to negotiate.				
The work of the agencies involved in housing services overlapped.	1	0	2	3
There was a lack of organisations working together pre-discharge from the armed forces to resolve my housing needs.	13	4	7	24
There was a lack of professional housing advice available pre-discharge from the armed forces.	13	5	11	29
Other	3	1	2	6
No Answer	4	11	8	23
Totals	67	35	55	157

[Data sourced from online survey 2012]

## Organisational collaboration

Figures 8.4 and 8.5 also give a veteran's perspective on organisational collaboration. It indicates that of forty-seven respondents, only five experienced organisations working with others to meet their housing need. This is possibly because initiatives such as the advice agency and Firm Base are relatively new, and the extent of organisations working together to meet the housing needs of veterans is at an immature stage.

**Figure 8.5: Did any of the organisations work together to meet your housing need?**



[Data sourced from online survey 2012]

The following quote links back to Chapter Three, relating to the barriers encountered by actors (boundary spanners) trying to work across organisational boundaries to collaborate with others to provide services (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002; William & Sullivan, 2010; Williams, 2012). Strong organisational boundaries are identified in the management literature as

necessary for successful organisations (Peters, 2013: 579), but they can be a barrier for those collaborating across different organisations. Equally, and as identified by Williams (2012), some actors in the role of boundary spanners do not have the capacity to see the broader picture beyond their own organisational boundaries.

“If ever there was a client group that really needed proper provision, it’s this client group. They really do, and it wouldn’t be that hard to do it better, it really wouldn’t. There needs to be a will and there needs to be, you know... the barriers need to come down in terms of that kind of protectionism of your own space and your own organisation” (Charity/6).

The literature and those working to provide services for military veterans acknowledge the problems associated with organisational collaboration. Figure 8.4 provides veterans’ perspectives on agencies working together to meet their housing needs and areas where veterans consider service provisions could be improved. Interestingly, an area particularly highlighted was the need for greater coordination between agencies involved’. The service user is therefore aware and experiencing the lack of coordination between the agencies delivering services.

## CONCLUSION

Most people that leave the armed forces make a successful transition into civilian life, but for some they experience multiple and complex problems and access to housing can be a major issue for them. There is evidence to suggest that veterans are over represented in the homeless population. The online survey findings, whilst not representative, fit with this assumption (see Figures 8.1 and 8.2). However, veterans are no different to other groups trying to access the scarce resource of social housing. They suffer the same type of multiple social exclusions as the rest of the homeless population, but unique to their biographies is their military service and possible incidents of PTSD. PTSD is frequently mentioned by practitioners in this research, and this may create an impression that it is more prevalent than it actually is amongst veterans. There is a lack of clarity on the rates of PTSD, although new research is reporting a sharp rise in Afghanistan veterans reporting this condition. Veterans' unique circumstances usually mean that they may never have had any formal contact with adult social services and this can result in services being unsure of how to engage or support this group. Equally, this group may have difficulty engaging with services having not used them before, and they may be unwilling to see themselves as vulnerable and requiring support.

Providing housing services is not just about accessing housing, it is about enabling individuals to sustain a tenancy. The organisations that have been established, or are developing services for military veterans, have been very



successful in helping this group sustain tenancies. However, these organisations cover only a small geographic area of Scotland, albeit in large population areas. These agencies are making links with others to house military veterans, although there does not appear to be much evidence of the MoD's joint housing advice office making the same local links. The case study organisations emphasise that links need to be made locally and earlier than when an individual is about to leave the armed forces. To enable this, the MoD's joint housing advice centre would have to change the way they provide their service by collaborating directly with local housing providers on behalf of armed forces personnel. Post data collection (2013), the MoD states that these links are being made.

In conclusion, whilst some organisations are working with others to meet the housing need of veterans, this is happening only in a few areas of Scotland, and some of these collaborations are relatively new. Thus, collaboration to counteract the effects of the fragmentation of the service delivery of housing fails to meet the housing needs of veterans throughout Scotland.

Subsequently, military veterans find it difficult to negotiate service provision; brokerage services in some areas are helping veterans to access services. It is ironic that public money is being used to fund brokerage services to help the public, including military veterans, access public services.

The next chapter is a blending of the preceding analysis chapters, along with the literature review and it draws out the key themes of the study and concludes the thesis.

## CHAPTER 9

### CAN COLLABORATIVE WORKING DELIVER?

#### Introduction

The aim of this study was to examine how organisations work together, focusing on the housing services they provided for military veterans as a means of exploring this issue. This exercise was undertaken using interpretative methods based on the researcher's and participants' interpretation of reality. The data was collected by adopting a case study approach using qualitative methods, supplemented by the use of an online survey for the collection, to a lesser extent, of quantitative data. The structure of this chapter follows the responses to the research questions. The conclusion returns to address the thesis' main propositions and discusses the overall contribution of the study.

Most of the literature on housing military veterans concentrates on homelessness. The unique contribution of this study is that it used theories and concepts of governance, networks and partnership working to analyse and explore how organisations work together to provide housing services for military veterans.

The case study organisations involved in this research included a local authority housing provider, an RSL, a veterans' advice agency and a military charity, as they represent the diversity of housing service provision for

military veterans in Scotland. The organisations in this study did not work directly with each other, but with other organisations in their geographical areas; within these clusters they all operated in similar types of networks. The thesis thus employed a high level governance theoretical framework (Stoker, 1998) to study the power of the state and how this impacts on the provision of housing services, and also how this affects housing organisations collaborating with others. However, as a theory, it was less helpful in describing what it means for the actors involved in collaborative working.

The literature on networks provided a context below the governance level relating to how organisations and actors interact to meet their objectives, and how power impacts on these activities at a local level. At the organisational level, Hudson & Hardy's (2002) enablers and barriers to coordination and Williams' (2012) work on the role of the actors that span organisational boundaries to work with others (the boundary spanners) were adopted to provide an explanation for organisational collaboration in practice. The study then focused on the provision of housing and the difficulties that military veterans encounter when accessing social housing.

The research questions sought to explore a governance framework, collaborative practice, housing provision and military veterans' experiences of accessing these services:

1. Question One “How do the case study organisations ‘fit’ a governance perspective?” This question is examined by exploring actors’ responses to strategic organisational questions adapted from Stoker’s (1998) governance theoretical framework.
2. Question Two “What is the nature of organisational collaboration at the case study organisations to meet the housing needs of military veterans in Scotland?” This question explores the practice of collaborative working at the case study organisations.
3. Question Three “How do the case study organisations operate in the area of policy and practice to house military veterans in Scotland?” This question highlights the problems associated with accessing housing (particularly in the area of social housing) for military veterans. It brings in the veterans’ view from the online survey, discussing their experiences of using housing services.

The follow section of the chapter is structured in three parts, sequenced on answering the research questions.

#### **How do the case study organisations ‘fit’ a governance perspective?**

Governance focuses the study on “institutional boundaries and patterns of organisational behaviour” (Newman, 2001), thus providing an understanding on how collaborative working takes place within these structures. From a

strategic perspective, governance focuses on the power of the state and this relates to how organisations are funded, regulated and operate within a legislative framework. The study of boundaries between the state and society, the power of the state and the added complexity of Scotland's devolved powers since the inception of the governance framework all add to the intricacy of this study.

We now consider the key themes to evolve from applying Stoker's (1998) five propositions of governance framework to the data. The governance narrative concentrates attention on the mix of organisations from the state and non-state institutions that provide housing services. This mix of delivery and associated fragmented provision of public services places an emphasis on collaboration to draw the system together, and the provision of housing is consistent with this analysis. Indeed, the literature highlights how partnership working is promoted to ameliorate fragmentation of service delivery (Dickinson & Glasby, 2010; Fenwick, Miller & McTavish, 2012; Rhodes, 2000; Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002) and the data is consistent with this assumption.

The provision of housing services for veterans has developed in different ways, partly because the third sector veterans' organisations involved in this research are located in the densely populated central belt of Scotland. Other less populated areas of Scotland are unlikely to have this type of coverage and this impacts on the type of organisations involved in the delivery of

services. The charity provides a completely different service to the advice agency, illustrating that the third sector provision is variable in nature. It is also related to some of the organisations being more controlled under hierarchical regimes than others are. The LA is more affected by hierarchical regimes and state control compared to third sector organisations. This is why governance theory is relevant to the study of organisational collaboration in the provision of housing services; it captures the diversity of service provision and delivery relating to the mix of institutions providing housing services.

Collaboration requires the blurring of organisational boundaries and responsibilities, which can produce ambiguity and uncertainty, and is the crux of why working with other organisations is so difficult to achieve. This study provides an explanation as to why the blurring of boundaries is crucial to successful mergers, if not partnerships, but it involves risk. This research found a mismatch between the more powerful staff at the strategic level, who could see the benefit of the blurring of boundaries, and those providing the services (with less power) who feel the ontological need for clear boundaries. The literature (Kaehne, 2010; Davies, 2009) highlights the tensions and insubordination between the strategic and operational levels. Consensus between the strategic and operational levels on the blurring of boundaries is always going to be difficult to achieve when some actors do not have the capacity or remit to take risks beyond their organisational boundaries.

In this study, there was no evidence of organisations operating with blurred boundaries. The organisations appear to have clear lines of responsibility, however a participant in this research said that responsibility for clients became a bit more murky and messy when things started to go wrong. This also relates to power dependencies between institutions involved in collective action, and in this research they are complex. Within these power dependencies there are imbalances; some organisations are more powerful than others, such as the LA, and some are less dependent, such as the charity. Networks were observed at all of the case study organisations but the complexity of interactions makes it difficult to ascertain if genuine partnership working actually takes place, or if it is an illusion that masks decisions remaining largely at the individual organisations through their siloed responsibilities. The findings are consistent with the literature on power relationships in networks (Ansell & Gash, 2007; Hudson, 2004; Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002), in that resource rich organisations have more control and power, and it may be that they retain decision-making rather than it being a shared responsibility.

The case study organisations ‘fit’ most of the conjectures of the governance perspective, except for the concept of autonomy from the state. Public sector organisations cannot be autonomous from the state because they are part of the state mechanism, and through funding they can limit the autonomy of the third sector organisations.



Stoker (1998) may have over-emphasised autonomy from the state. Indeed in the literature Rhodes' (1997) hollowing out of the state theory is contested by Lowe (2004); Fenwick, Miller & McTavish (2012); and Hudson & Lowe (2004), who argue that the state power has not declined and that the shift from government to governance has resulted in a reconstituted state power rather than a hollowing out. This may suggest that hierarchical systems and state control may be more prevalent than governance regimes in the provision of social housing. Some commentators such as Grix & Philpots (2011) and Kjaer (2011) suggest that if one aspect of governance is not observed (for example autonomy from the state) then it cannot be analysed with the given phenomenon of governance. One of the reasons for this lack of autonomy from the state is that the state uses funding, legislation and regulation regimes to control organisations' outputs. However, even given that autonomy from the state may be overstated, the governance model still provides a framework for analysing the phenomenon of collaborative working. The framework "identified key features of complex reality" (Stoker 1998: 18) to study.

Stoker's framework is deceptively simple; however, it still appears to resonate with issues that organisations are struggling with today. It focused attention on the complexity of state control and how this impacts on organisations delivering, and collaborating with other institutions to deliver, services. Studying governance highlighted that the organisations involved in this research are neither hierarchical bureaucracies nor networks of self-

steering regimes under governance. They all differ and are at different stages between the defined government and governance regimes. The explanation for this is that it reflects the shift seen in the last thirty years in the provision of social housing, from it being provided largely by bureaucratic local authority institutions, to the current network of providers. There is little literature in the area of co-existing regimes and Kjaer (2011: 11) points out that the effects of how they interact and impact on the present in organisational collaboration are unknown. This is an area that would benefit from further research as it is the crux of why competing objectives inhibit organisational collaboration.

Governance at the organisations is more complex than it first appears; for example, the LA is the organisation that is most controlled by government, however, of all of the case study organisations it appears to be the most involved in self-steering regimes to provide services. This suggests, and as argued by Klijn (2008: 510), that perhaps the term self-steering regimes should be substituted with self-organising, thus, downplaying the governance assumption that these regimes have autonomy from the state.

Kaehne (2012: 2) discusses the link between governance and partnerships and how partnerships have become an “important theme in the analysis of policy and governance”. This next section therefore discusses such partnerships/collaborations.

## **What is the nature of organisational collaboration at the case study organisations?**

Most of the literature on collaboration between institutions derives from health and social care. Given that housing is crucial to a person's health and well-being, there is, surprisingly, a dearth of literature on collaboration between housing providers. This is at a time when organisational collaboration is seen as crucial in the provision of public services, and this research is an attempt to fill that gap. This study thus provides a focus on the nature of collaboration in networks between the public and third sectors providing housing services for military veterans in different areas of Scotland.

William & Sullivan (2010: 7) state that differing and overly bureaucratic governance arrangements present a challenge for organisations trying to collaborate. Carmel & Harlock (2008) argue that partnership working between the public and third sector can fail because of the disparity between the sectors, emphasising that, unlike the public sector, the third sector is not a generic service provider as essentially it is working to a different ethos. The data from this study is consistent with the literature, i.e. it can be difficult to find a bureaucratic fit between those organisations that provide generic services (in this research the LA and RSL) and the third sector organisations that provide bespoke services for military veterans. For third sector organisations that work with the public sector, they may be expected to conform to procedures and bureaucracies that are too restrictive for their

smaller specialised organisations. In practice, the third sector has more flexibility to provide services tailored to veterans, compared to the public sector. Different objectives are inherent in the mismatch between generic (public sector) and specialised (third sector) services. As a result of this, the organisations do quite different things and this impacts on their ability to collaborate. The LA has less discretion as it has to provide services to the broader public and it has to meet statutory obligations, for example housing homeless people. In practice, this means more tightly controlled policies and procedures, compared to some of the other organisations in this study.

The level of exposure to collaborative activity at the case study organisations varied, with the local authority actors being more involved in this activity; this is largely because their service provision is dependent on other providers.

The advice agency depends on other agencies to provide housing; therefore, it has to engage with others to access services. However, its notion of engagement is different to the LA's and this is because it is not so shackled by regulation and legislation, in comparison to the public sector. The RSL has more flexibility than the public sector, but it is constrained by funding and legislation too. The military charity has the most autonomy of all the case study organisations and this is because it has not been brought into 'governable terrain', albeit it does receive public funds through its RSL status. Although the charity is regulated under the same regime as the RSL, it does appear to be more autonomous and this may be because historically it developed without state control and it is not a generic housing provider. This

organisation is close to its client group and it realises that it has to collaborate with others to meet its clients' needs.

In this research it is difficult to ascertain if the charity is any more successful in its collaborations than the public sector organisations. Also there was very little evidence that the case study organisations had any mechanisms in place to evaluate collaborative working. Perhaps this is because outcomes of collaborations are little understood and patchy, particularly the benefits for service users (Glasby & Dickinson, 2008; Rummery, 2009). The LA, the RSL and the advice agency are more involved in joint working within networks compared to the charity. Figure 9.0 illustrates characteristics of collaboration at the case study organisations.

**Figure 9.0: Characteristics of case study collaborations within networks**

Case study organisation	Mode of service provision	Drivers to collaboration	Type of networks observed	Level of collaboration	Procedural mechanisms
The Local Authority Housing Provider	Generic services	Statutory obligation and the need to collaborate with others to provide a wide range of public services.	Issue networks with an unequal balance of power.	High in provision of generic services. Low in the provision of services for military veterans.	Protocols. Common housing register. Attending MoD's Firm Base meetings. Signed up to Military Community Covenant.
The RSL	Generic services	Engage with LA (to meet their homeless obligations), other agencies to support tenants and bespoke veterans' agencies to support veterans.	Relatively new networks observed. Motivated by moral nature of supporting veterans. Equal balance of power but more about knowledge exchange rather than policy making.	High in provision of generic services. Medium/low level in bespoke services for military veterans.	Protocols. Attending MoD's Firm Base meetings.

The Advice Agency	Bespoke veterans' service	This agency's primary objective is to access services on behalf of veterans.	Operating in many networks. Motivation; promoting veterans' awareness & accessing services for their clients. Best described as practice networks. High level of actors capacity to operate in networks	High.	Protocols. Attending MoD's Firm Base meetings.
The Charity	Bespoke veterans' service	To meet the housing need of veterans when they move on from supported accommodation.	Tentatively making links/networks. Motivation - not through the need for funding but more about accessing different services as they are evolving to meet the needs of younger veterans.	Low/medium.	Protocols. Attending MoD's Firm Base meetings.

Observations made at the Firm Base meetings<sup>11</sup> in different areas of Scotland would suggest that links and information sharing is taking place, but genuine partnerships were not observed. This is not to say it is not happening, it was just not observed on those occasions and partnerships may have developed since then. In other contexts the case study organisations are signing protocols with other institutions. The level of exchange is dependent on the context and the different organisations involved.

Therefore the type of networks observed differed and did not fit neatly into the current emphasis in the literature on networks of policy community and issue networks (Hill, 2014). This is because the literature fails to capture the capacity and actions of actors that work within networks. These actions are crucial to the success or failure of joint working and therefore policy delivery through networks, with networks being where governance takes place in the interface between public and third sector organisations.

This research highlights that organisations from the public and third sector have significantly differing objectives. The local authority case study provides generic services curtailed by legislation, regulation and whatever policies the government chooses to prioritise and promote; there is very little scope for local dissent in the current Scottish policy framework. In contrast,

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<sup>11</sup> The MoD's Firm Base initiative operates throughout Scotland with thirteen branches divided into geographic areas, making links with different sectors to promote military and civilian engagement.



the third sector can provide a more bespoke service without the restrictions of hierarchical bureaucracy. Although it is affected by this bureaucracy, it is not to the same extent that the public sector organisations are. One interpretation of this (as discussed in the last section) is that the organisations involved are working in different modes of governance.

Cameron & Lloyd (2011: 363) discuss three different modes of governance: networks, hierarchical and market. Whilst the third sector organisations and the RSL involved in this research may operate within a few of these different governance modes, the LA's mode of governance was more definitely hierarchical and this incompatibility makes collaboration to meet shared objectives challenging. This is interesting, as this research contradicts the notion of three different modes of governance, namely networks, hierarchical and market. The local authority is the most involved in networks and at the same time the most controlled under hierarchy, compared to the other organisations involved in this study.

These barriers to collaboration are where the 'boundary spanners' operate; these actors facilitate collaboration within and between organisations. The data from this study is consistent with Williams' (2012) work on boundary spanners, as detailed in Chapter Three. The theory of street level bureaucracy was not as important for this research as originally anticipated. However, what has become important is the role of the 'boundary spanners'; these actors spend an increasing amount of their time negotiating structural

organisational boundaries using their agency. Williams (2012: 144) states “the value of the boundary spanners construct is that it identifies actors’ attributes and resources that are required to build capacity within collaborations”. Boundary spanners are critical to the notion of partnership working, yet they are neglected in the literature on networks. The application of the boundary spanners concept is new to housing research.

Boundaries are often perceived as barriers to collaboration. However, Williams (2012: 139) sees them as being areas of transformation, collaboration and innovation. Williams (2012: 128) identifies a ‘wish list’ (see Figure 9.1) of personal attributes, key skills and competencies that actors require to enable collaboration. In this research, all of the participants at the housing organisations were working as boundary spanners in the provision of housing services; this role is the norm rather than the exception. As would be expected, the participants from the organisations that were more involved in collaborations, i.e. the local authority and advice agency, were spending more time on this activity compared to participants at the military charity.

The data from this research suggests that some individuals may not have the boundary spanner skills identified in Figure 9.1. For example, actors may not want to give up control and fail to see the benefits of collaboration from a multi-organisational perspective. As one respondent in this research stated, when discussing involving other people, ‘it’s always a bit hit or miss’. What this discussion highlights is that the role of agency and actors in collaboration

is little understood and researched, compared to structural analysis. Equally, recognition and appreciation has to be given to the task and role of collaboration, given that it is so important in the provision of public services and, as highlighted in the literature review, it is often treated as a bolt-on activity (Williams & Sullivan, 2011: 9) and the activity is not cost neutral (Rummery, 2006).

**Figure 9.1 Desirable personal characteristics for the role of a boundary spanner**

<b>Knowledge</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appreciation of multi-organisational environments</li> <li>• Understanding of the policy process</li> <li>• Appreciation of different organisational contexts</li> </ul>
<b>Experience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working in different types of organisation and policy area</li> </ul>
<b>Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiation and conflict resolution</li> <li>• Cultivation and maintenance of effective interpersonal relationships</li> <li>• Able to build trusting relationships and cultures</li> <li>• Effective communication skills</li> <li>• Ability to work in teams and groups</li> <li>• Critical analysis skills to cope with high complexity</li> <li>• Innovative, creative and entrepreneurial</li> <li>• Comfortable working with cultural, professional and organisational diversity</li> <li>• Ability to manage multiple accountabilities</li> <li>• Ability to work in different modes of governance</li> </ul>
<b>Personal attributes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tolerance of ambiguity</li> <li>• Risk taking</li> </ul>

- Self-confident
- Respectful and personable
- Diplomatic
- Honest and committed
- Patient and persevering

Extracted from job-description of boundary spanner (Williams 2012: 128)

Figure 9.1 illustrates the need for boundary spanners to be able to tolerate ambiguity, deal with complexity and take risks. This links with the discussion on organisational boundaries in the governance section. The data from this study suggests that risk (or lack of risk) taking is a barrier to collaboration, with senior managers having the confidence and remit to take risks whilst those at middle or lower levels do not have this capacity. Equally, the literature discusses how this complexity and ambiguity generates confusion and failure to progress (Glasby & Dickinson, 2009: 7). Davies (2009) also highlights the difficulty of communication or exchange of ideas between the strategic and operational level; the explanation of risk taking may explain the reason for this. What this study suggests, and as indicated by Williams (2012), is that the role of the boundary spanner is little understood and is vitally important in any sort of organisational collaboration.

Trust was frequently mentioned by the participants in this research as being important whilst working with others. Within the literature trust is described as a pre-requisite and indeed the ‘glue’ for networks to function (Rhodes, 2007; Ansell & Gash, 2007; Arganoff, 2007; Hudson *et al*, 1999). In this research, a respondent stated that trust was the ‘biggie’ and they could not see how there could ever be trust, ‘not complete and utter unrequited trust’

whilst others said there had to be trust. This study found that trust is used by participants to capture many different attributes. This suggests that the notion of trust in the network literature is under conceptualised and needs greater exploration, especially as trust is seen as crucial to networks.

In conclusion here, the research suggests that the nature of collaboration (with other institutions) at the case study organisations differs and depends on the context and actors involved (Skelcher & Sullivan, 2008: 757). In this study, all of the case study organisations were working in different geographic areas of Scotland, yet within these clusters they were all working with similar organisations in networks. Some of the collaborations are at the lower end of the range and may be better described as information sharing and exchange networks. Others include formal agreements, and there are clear examples of how organisations work with others to procure housing for veterans.

What has become apparent is that the objectives to collaborate can be quite different between the public and the third sector. The LA collaborates because it is the only way that it can provide the range of services that it has a statutory obligation to provide. The RSL collaborates with the LA in its area because it gets funding from there and the RSL meets the LA's statutory obligation to house homeless households. The RSL collaborates with others, including the MoD, because the organisations have taken a moral decision to support military veterans and see the need to cooperate with others to meet this objective. The advice agency's service delivery is totally dependent on

other organisations to meet the needs of their clients, therefore collaboration and networking with other organisations is fundamental to its existence. The military charity is evolving to collaborate with others to allow their clients to move onto tenancies in the public and private sector. All of these activities mentioned are outcomes of governance; for example, the different types of organisations involved in the provision of housing services, working across organisational boundaries and highlighting the questionable autonomy from the state.

Barriers to collaboration in any sector are significant and those working to span those barriers may not always have the necessary skill sets to fulfil this role. In this study, the MoD's Firm Base Initiative and the Military Community Covenant have been positive influences on collaboration between different housing providers. Figure 9.0 illustrates that of the four case study organisations only one is working at a high level of collaboration for military veterans and the same organisation is operating across many networks, with the actors/boundary spanners having a high capacity/ability level. This is because it is a relatively new organisation and its main objective is to collaborate with others to access services for veterans; this is the only organisation of its kind in Scotland. The rest of the case study organisations are working at the low to medium level of collaboration. However, this research focused on a few organisations that are working with others, but it did not focus on the wider military charities' community, or other local authorities and RSLs that may be working largely in isolation from the rest of

the military support community. At all of the case study organisations collaboration is an effective strategy to improve *some* veterans' housing outcomes. However, as an overall strategy, collaborative working fails to meet this objective because of the fragmentation of housing service delivery and the barriers to collaboration. It is too reliant on the individual abilities of the actors involved in collaborative working. Partnership working as a solution to resolve the fragmentation of service delivery under governance fails to provide housing services that are accessible to *all* military veterans throughout Scotland.

The focus on the care of ex-forces personnel, political pressure to support this group and media housing stories reporting on social housing accessibility issues for veterans all provide a focus on this area of practice. This leads on to the third and final research question.

**How do the case study organisations operate in the area of policy and practice to house military veterans in Scotland?**

While much of the literature relating to veterans and housing is focused on homelessness, this study takes an organisational perspective on how they work together to provide housing services. This is at a time when new veterans' organisations are forming, older veterans' organisations are evolving and public sector housing providers are under pressure to prioritise this group.

Chapter Four discussed how the Military Covenant can deliver on aspects of health, education and welfare benefits for armed forces personnel, but crucially housing is an area where the Military Covenant cannot entirely deliver. The Armed Forces Act 2011 means that the Military Covenant is recognised in law for the first time in the UK (Government, 2011). In Scotland, the Military Covenant has not impacted on the legislative framework. Ex-forces personnel are to be treated the same as those in similar housing circumstances, although some housing organisations are choosing to prioritise this group and this links to them being able to make local decisions. In contrast, local authorities in England have to frame their housing allocation policies to give additional preference to members of the armed forces community who have urgent housing needs (MoD, 2012c). The ethos of the Military Covenant is that those in the armed forces should not be disadvantaged because of military service. Walters (2012: 29) reminds us that this means fair but not privileged treatment. Strachan (2009) argues that measuring equality of provision is difficult. The crux of the Military Covenant is that housing is more difficult to resource and it is not a universal public service compared to areas such as health and education. Additionally, it is difficult to link housing disadvantage with military service. Housing is the wobbly pillar of the Military Covenant.

Military veterans may have little experience of accessing welfare services, including social housing, and when they do they are likely to encounter the fragmentation of service delivery which may cause confusion and frustration.



For example, at the advice agency it is common for veterans to have to complete twelve different housing applications to be housed in one area. Common housing registers (CHRs) would simplify this multiple application process greatly and agencies are strongly encouraged by the Scottish Government to adopt CHRs. However, consensus between organisations is that common housing registers are difficult to achieve and time consuming.

The profile of a veteran may impact on them accessing social housing. During this research, an unexpected feature of the data collection was the frequency of the mention of PTSD by practitioners. PTSD describes a range of anxiety disorder symptoms that can develop after someone has experienced a traumatic event (NHS, 2013; MIND, 2013). Research funded by the MoD, of 8 261 regular UK armed forces personnel who were deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan or other operational deployment areas, found that there was no difference in the rates of PTSD between those from the armed forces who had been deployed and those who had not, albeit there was an increased risk for those in a combat role. However, the non-deployment group may have been exposed to other types of trauma, including assaults or accidents, or they may have been deployed in peace keeping operations and witnessed atrocities in this role. The overall findings were that “lower rank, having had a serious accident, having left service and childhood adversity were consistently associated with PTSD, regardless of deployment status, whereas deployment to Iraq, Afghanistan or elsewhere was not associated with PTSD” (Jones *et al*, 2012).

Combat Stress (2013) reports that:

“The majority of armed forces personnel deployed do not experience lasting mental wounds as a result of their service. However, around 1 in 25 Regulars and 1 in 20 Reservists will report symptoms of PTSD following deployment in Iraq or Afghanistan. This is very similar to the rate in the general population.”

But, importantly, it highlights that “one in five Veterans are likely to suffer from a common mental illness - such as depression, anxiety or substance (generally alcohol) misuse - which has been caused or aggravated by their Armed Forces experiences” (Combat Stress, 2013). This specific type of profile, together with low educational attainment and socio-economic group prior to enlistment (Parliament, 2013; Johnsen *et al*, 2008; Ravenhill, 2008) places this type of veteran at greater risk of homelessness.

An important finding in this research is the high level of PTSD reported in practice at the case study organisations in this research, compared to studies on the rates of PTSD. One explanation is that those involved in accessing services at the case study organisations are likely to be the individuals who have experienced difficulties transitioning from military to civilian life. They are veterans who are more likely to report PTSD compared to those still serving in the armed forces. Jones *et al* (2012) highlight that those who have left the armed services are more likely to report symptoms of PTSD compared to those still serving. The paper calls for more research into the variation in

reporting between those who are in the armed forces and leavers, suggesting there may be a greater willingness to report PTSD after leaving the armed forces (Jones *et al*, 2012). This study reports that there is an inconsistency in the number of those suffering with PTSD reported in practice at the case study organisations, compared with research. This area requires further investigation. Combat Stress (2013) report that on average it takes thirteen years after leaving the armed forces to present with PTSD. This is not to say that these people have only just developed PTSD, it is likely that they have been suffering from the condition for many years. However, new research carried out by Combat Stress (2014) reported a 57% increase in 2012-2013 of Afghanistan veterans reporting PTSD, reducing the presentation time of symptoms to eighteen months.

This heightened awareness of PTSD reported in practice in this study means that housing organisations have concerns about how to support veterans in their tenancies when they house them. A research participant identified how mainstream services can often be hesitant about this group and prefer to refer them to specialised veterans services. This has important implications for future service provision, as the veterans' population will increasingly be affected by recent and current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. This coupled with the lag time for reporting PTSD means that public services are increasingly likely to encounter the need to support veterans with PTSD.

This study's findings reveal that the particular profile of this group means that they are generally unknown to welfare services, meaning that those

providing services to this group may have had little experience of engaging with them. For example, a practitioner (at the charity) commented on how they did not use the same sort of framework to assess support needs for this group, compared to other groups, because “these guys see themselves in a particular way, they don’t want to be seen as needing a social worker and I have to work really, really carefully with them”. Higate (2000) discusses how the strong tough masculine identity of this group makes its members feel uncomfortable if they are perceived as being vulnerable. Equally, personal pride may impact on their desire to navigate welfare services. This finding has important implications for practice, suggesting that veteran-specific services or training for generic service providers is needed to support this group.

To answer research Question Three (How do the case study organisations operate in the area of policy and practice to house military veterans?), the lack of social housing means that housing providers find it difficult to manage priority in allocations for groups with competing needs. Housing allocation policy in these circumstances means that major leaps cannot be made; the reality for policy making and outcomes in this area is that it is focused on day-to-day tensions that occur in practice. In Scotland, homelessness legislation has widened access to settled accommodation for the majority of homeless households, but this means that applicants spend longer in temporary accommodation. UK welfare reform may undermine Scottish

legislation as tensions between Westminster and Holyrood exist regarding austerity versus anti-austerity.

The delivery of housing services is fragmented and this fits with a governance perspective on the 'messy' delivery of public services and how collaboration is seen as a solution to 'stitch' service delivery back together. Governance theory also explains why government now operates at the strategic level rather than the organisational level, meaning that it influences rather than delivers services. In Scotland, this has resulted in a variety of different allocation policies in the 32 local authorities' areas; some prioritise veterans whilst others do not. This means that the housing landscape in Scotland has area specific variations. The MoD's housing advice service does not provide area specific professional housing advice, and an independent evaluation of the MoD housing advice service could improve the delivery of this service. This makes it difficult for veterans to navigate services and this is where the advice agency and the charity operate. Actors within these organisations span boundaries to enable veterans to access housing services.

The advice agency provides a brokerage service between housing providers and veterans. The advice agency is a relatively new organisation and it has been set up for a specific purpose - to support veterans' issues. The military housing charity is a long established organisation and is evolving to meet the changing needs of younger veterans. Feedback from the case study organisations indicates that the type of veteran presenting is getting younger,

with often complex needs exacerbated by recent periods of intense fighting on the front-line. These very young veterans are likely to require services for many decades in the future. Therefore, providing sustainable services is essential to meet the current and future needs of this group.

Practitioner perception of this group is that they may present with high levels of PTSD. This perception may be misguided and it may be an issue of accuracy of assessment, however it raises the concern about supporting this group, in practice, in sustaining their housing tenancies. The incidences of PTSD, the discrepancy between the higher levels of presentations of PTSD in veterans compared to those still in the armed forces (Combat Stress, 2013) and how this impacts on the provision of services all require further research.

The findings suggest that some veterans have specific needs and some welfare providers are unsure how to meet these needs. The advice agency offers help and assistance to these types of providers to support veterans in their tenancies, as does the military charity. However, these agencies are small and only focus on certain areas of Scotland. These institutions help to promote collaboration between the public and the third sector to provide housing services for veterans. Military charities have been criticised in the past for being more concerned about their organisations than providing a service for their clients (Strachan, 2011; RUSI, 2010). Whilst that is not the case at the organisations studied for this research, limited feedback from this

study appears to suggest that some of the military charities are indeed introspective and too focused on protecting their organisational boundaries.

We should not be surprised at organisations trying to protect their boundaries. Peters (2013: 579) argues that management literature emphasises that strong organisational cultures are important for organisations to be successful. However, by creating a strong internal culture it may present a barrier to boundary spanning activities, as actors are strongly committed to their internal organisations' ideology rather than external collaboration.

The following section provides a conclusion for this thesis, brings together the three strands of this discussion section and ends with the contribution of the study.

## CONCLUSION

I was drawn to this area of study over five years ago when I learned that military veterans were recognised as being an over-represented group in the homeless population. During this period there has been a surge of societal interest in the armed forces and their support needs. They are the new 'halo' group; what I mean by halo group is that the public bestows a 'righteous title' on favoured employment groups. For example, nurses have been described as 'angels' and the armed forces and military veterans are now seen as 'heroes'.

This study found that access to housing was the most pressing problem facing veterans, followed by unemployment. The research focuses on the provision of social housing where there is an issue with supply and demand. The supply of housing is inelastic and the supply of social housing does not meet demand. Whilst housing is an expensive and immovable resource, the tenure of housing has changed significantly in the last thirty years, with a major reduction in social housing. The LA involved in this research is a large housing provider with over 30,000 houses dispersed in a substantial geographic area, but even given the size of its housing portfolio it does not have enough social housing. For these reasons, access to housing for many, including veterans, in the case study organisations' areas remains challenging, for both those trying to access housing and for those providing the service to meet competing demands.



Housing military veterans is a fast moving area of practice; in terms of social housing allocations, the Scottish Government's guidance does not give military veterans any priority over similar groups. Even given that there is no statutory obligation to do so, some housing providers in Scotland are choosing to prioritise this group. In this study, the reasons given for these decisions were based on moral considerations.

The study found that the Military Covenant is able to deliver on certain areas of welfare provision, i.e. where disadvantage can be clearly linked to military service such as health and education, but for housing it is more difficult. It could be argued that because armed forces personnel have been housed during their employment they are then disadvantaged when they leave the armed forces and give up their housing, but this is tenuous compared to clear-cut health and education links. So, whilst the Military Covenant can deliver on health and education, it is more difficult to deliver on housing and this is because it is considered the wobbly pillar of the welfare state and not a universal service. As housing is provided in both the private and public sector, this dichotomy of delivery adds to the confusion over it being 'a social right or a commodity' (Clapham *et al*, 1990, cited in Lowe, 2011: 4).

It was not the overall concern of this study to explore if military veterans should get priority or not in social housing, as even if this group were given priority there is insufficient social housing. What this study sought was to examine how collaborative working helps to meet the housing needs of this

group. In this study, governance theory was used; it focuses attention on the provision of welfare services including housing, and increases our understanding of the complexity of organisational linkages and networking. It draws attention to the influence of the state and organisational boundaries, where collaboration between different institutions takes place and this is where the networks are important. Governance is about structures and regulation, whilst networks are about the channels and connections within these structures.

Overall, the data collected in this research indicated that it did not entirely fit a governance perspective, with the autonomy from the state being the most difficult to fit, even given the diversity of the organisations involved in this research. This may be because housing is controlled by a mix of hierarchical, governance and network regimes. Future research into governance would benefit from focusing on the tensions and dilemmas caused by old and new forms of hierarchical, governance and networks systems co-existing and interacting. Kjaer (2011: 11) highlights that this is an area where there is little literature and the impact of this on organisational collaboration is unknown.

The state may no longer have the monopoly on providing social housing, but delivery is still within the 'shadow of the hierarchical state' through funding, legislation and regulation regimes. This is evident at the case study organisations; housing organisations have some discretion in prioritising

housing allocations, meaning that some prioritise veterans and others do not, and this leads to local variation in policy. The state is now more involved in steering rather than rowing in the provision of welfare services, and social housing fits this perspective.

Governance theory provides an explanation for the fragmentation of welfare services, and housing fits this assumption. An example of this is veterans having to complete multiple housing applications to be housed in one area of a city. Veterans are now assisted in overcoming this complexity of service delivery in one city in Scotland, by a brokerage service which, in this research, is the advice agency. This agency is mostly funded by public funds to access services that in the past were largely provided by bureaucratic public sector organisations. Government now funds brokerage agencies to enable the public (in this study the veteran) to access services and this is an example of how the state and other actors find solutions to the fragmentation of service delivery, i.e. they steer rather than row. The delivery of housing services for veterans varies in different areas of Scotland, partly because of the population being concentrated in the central belt. Also the third sector bespoke veterans' organisations provide different types of services as these organisations are not planned rationally across Scotland.

The fragmentation of housing services places an emphasis on the need for collaboration between the different sectors. Assumptions such as the warm 'cosy' concept of working with others, motivated to provide public services to

address societies' 'wicked issues', can mask underlying issues because it belies the inherent difficulties of collaboration between different types of organisations in different sectors. Rummery (2009) argues that information on outcomes of partnership working is patchy and this is consistent with this research, with no evidence of outcomes being measured. This leads commentators to question what the benefits are for the service users (Glasby & Dickinson, 2008; Rummery, 2009). In practice, collaboration as a strategy to deliver cohesion in the fragmented area of service delivery, fails to meet this high ideal.

The case study organisations were all involved in networks, but collaborative activity was impacted on by individual governance, cultures, policies, differing objectives, level of autonomy from the state and different service provision, with the public sector being more controlled under hierarchical regimes compared to the third sector organisations. In this study, the local authority was the only organisation that could be truly described as belonging to the public sector, although the RSL had characteristics of this sector. The third sector can be more innovative because it is less constrained under hierarchical regimes than the public sector. Nevertheless, the restrictions placed on the public sector by the state can trickle down to the third sector, particularly if it is dependent on the public sector for funding.

Carmel & Harlock (2008: 156) state that the control tools used on the third sector 'tends to institute them as technocratic and generic service providers';

the third sector organisations involved in this research do not conform to this assumption. However, the study found that third sector organisations, dependant on public sector funding, are under greater pressure to conform to public sector objectives. Equally, current fiscal constraints are likely to put further pressure on third sector organisations to conform, as they scramble with others to seek ever elusive funding.

All of the case study organisations met at different Firm Base meetings in Scotland and this appears to be working well, albeit observations made at these meetings indicate that collaboration may be better described as lower level cooperation rather than higher level partnerships. Interaction across organisational boundaries was common; however, outcomes are difficult to measure because of the differences between the lower level exchanges, such as information sharing, through to higher level formalised agreements and the context of the exchange. All of the case study organisations are dependent on others, but some are more dependent and some are more powerful, particularly public sector organisations that control funding of other agencies.

The advice agency is totally reliant on others to access housing services, and was working at the highest level of collaboration compared to the other case study organisations because of the nature of their service provision. This is consistent with Skelcher & Sullivan's (2008: 757) assumption that the degree of collaboration depends on the context and the actors involved. A participant highlighted how working with others could be a bit hit or miss,

dependant on the ability of the other person, making it difficult to define, evaluate or measure collaboration outcomes.

This research found that organisational boundaries were difficult to span because of a disparity between strategic and operational objectives. Senior staff interviewed within agencies clearly saw the benefit in blurring organisational boundaries to deliver services, whilst those at the operational level emphasised the need for clear boundaries. To reiterate, Peters (2013: 579) highlights that management literature emphasises that strong institutional cultures are important for successful organisations. But, by creating these strong internal structures, it promotes organisational boundaries that become barriers for boundary spanners to operate across. Boundary spanners collaborate across boundaries using agency to negotiate organisational structures to work with others. This study found that a lot of time and effort is placed on working with others, but there was no evidence of outcomes being measured. Sullivan & Skelcher (2002: 35) argue that collaboration is the exception because of different organisational interests, professional agendas and ways of working. Nonetheless, the research participants clearly saw benefits in working with others to better support their clients and provide a wider range of services for them, if the considerable challenges to collaborate with other could be surmounted.

The study found that because of the armed forces' heightened status, organisations and their actors are particularly willing to support this group

and this may mean that they are more willing to collaborate with others to do so. However, there is a gap in knowledge as how best to meet veterans' needs, how to support them and how to make effective links with other organisations.

Social housing providers are concerned about supporting veterans in their tenancies in case they have, or may develop, PTSD. Although the evidence for the perception of high levels of PTSD among veterans is inconclusive, it is a concern for service providers. It also identified that there is an interaction problem between public sector providers and military veterans, partly because veterans are an unknown group to generic services and veterans may be reluctant to seek help because they see themselves in a certain way and do not want to be identified as being vulnerable. In these areas, the advice agency and charity seek to close the gap; for instance, they will provide housing support to veterans to help them in a new tenancy. They help veterans to maintain their tenancy by enabling them to obtain funding to set up a home and access services such as alcohol addiction treatment and mental health provision, and support them to find employment. By doing this, the agencies not only help the veteran, they help the housing organisations to sustain tenancies.

A limitation of this research is that the case study data cannot be generalised to represent the whole of Scotland. Nonetheless, the case study method has involved triangulating evidence and the use of multiple case studies, and the

study included an online survey of service users, adding to the rigour of the research and the findings. In hindsight, an ethnographic study with one agency may have provided a more in-depth study of outcomes. However, this would have limited the study to one geographic area of Scotland.

Additionally, it was never the intention of this thesis to measure individual collaborative outcomes statistically; rather it was about focusing on the extent of organisations working together to house military veterans.

In conclusion, this study posed the question ‘to what extent do organisations work together to provide housing services for military veterans in Scotland?’ Housing is considered the wobbly pillar of the welfare state, it is also the wobbly pillar of the Military Covenant, with health and educational outcomes being easier to achieve in comparison to housing outcomes. The supply and demand of social housing is inelastic with many competing groups requiring this scarce resource.

Governance theory provides an explanation for the mix of organisations providing housing services for military veterans, which makes it difficult for veterans to negotiate. Networks are the essential communicative aspect of governance. Boundary spanners span organisational boundaries to collaborate with others to draw the system back together, but there are many barriers to this activity. These include governance aspects such as structures, regulation, cultures, network issues, differing organisational objectives and the skill level of individual actors.



Networks were important in this study as this is where the messiness of governance occurs, and where actors work across organisational boundaries to provide public services. The literature on governance was helpful in providing a macro-level framework to guide the study, and subsequently network theory illuminated meso level activities at the case study organisations. This study found that the governance themes do not capture the notion that hierarchical structures still exist alongside governance and that organisations may be controlled under various and differing regimes; this means when they work with others in networks there may never be a balance of power between them. For example, the local authority involved in this research was the most powerful organisation in the networks that it operated within. This was because it was mostly controlled by hierarchical regimes. Through this, the state directs outputs and provides funding and with that funding the local authority has the balance of power within networks. At the same time the LA is involved in providing services with a mix of organisations in a governance regime, bringing the third sector into 'governable terrain'.

The context of the exchange varied both within and between the case study organisations and this means that the type of network varied too. The findings of this study did not fit neatly into the current thinking on policy and issue networks, and whilst issue networks were more relevant to this research, this literature lacked an explanation for the ability of actors and hence failed overall to capture what takes place within networks.

The governance and network literature offers an explanation at the macro and meso levels of organisational collaboration, but limited consideration of the practicalities inherent in the work of 'boundary spanners'.

Most of the collaborations to house military veterans are relatively new. This may be why the perception of military veterans (from the online survey) was that very few organisations worked together to meet their housing needs, but this was based on their housing experiences over the last ten years. New initiatives to facilitate joint working and expand networks include the MoD's Firm Base Initiative, which brings service providers together in different areas of Scotland. The study did not gain access to carry out a full case study of the MoD's housing resettlement services. However, the data collected from both practitioners and military veterans suggests that little direct contact is made by the MoD with housing organisations to meet the housing need of those about to leave the armed forces.

Overall, the extent of organisations working together to house military veterans is relatively low to medium at the case study organisations. This study intentionally focused on organisations that were working with others, rather than on those that did not, therefore it is likely that throughout Scotland levels of collaborative working to house military veterans is relatively low or immature. As an overall strategy, organisational collaboration to overcome the fragmentation of social housing delivery will improve housing outcomes for *some* but not *all* military veterans. This study found that the policy drivers for collaborative working are clear, but

delivering this objective in practice can be difficult and messy, and for the military veteran it can appear chaotic and be difficult to negotiate.

And finally, the research questions set for this thesis explored state influence on collaboration and networks in the provision of housing services, and how this was experienced by a particular group. The study's intellectual contribution is that it provides a more nuanced theoretical understanding of governance and networks, based on robust empirical evidence as to how they operate. The assumption that the hierarchical state has shifted to a more diffused governance arrangement is too simplistic, for it is far more complex than that. Critically, power arrangements have not been diluted but rather they are reconstituted, and this change has major implications for the coordination and delivery of public services.

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## APPENDIX A INTRODUCTION LETTER TO BE SENT TO ORGANISATIONS

To [name to be inserted]

Subject: Research project: On how organisations work together to provide housing services for military veterans

I am currently studying for a PhD in housing studies at the University of Stirling. My research is about how organisations work together to provide housing services for veterans, in Scotland. I invite you to participate in this research it will involve carrying out a case study of your organisation. Full details of what is involved in a case study are contained in the enclosed appendix B. The study has been approved by the School of Applied Social Science Research Ethics Committee.

I have recently completed my MSc project on “why do service veterans remain over-represented in the homeless population”? I am sensitive to veterans’ issues from my recent research which involved face-to-face interviews. I have worked in the housing profession and think that social housing and housing markets are very area specific and this can make it difficult for a veteran to negotiate.

I have attached further information on the study and a consent form. If you require further clarification on the project please contact myself at the above address, I am happy to discuss it further by telephone or by visiting your organisation. You may also discuss it with my supervisors: Professor Isobel Anderson on (01786 467718 [Isobel.anderson@stir.ac.uk](mailto:Isobel.anderson@stir.ac.uk)) or Professor Kirstein Rummery on (01786 467693 [Kirstein.rummery@stir.ac.uk](mailto:Kirstein.rummery@stir.ac.uk)).

Yours faithfully

Christine Robinson

PhD research student

Encs

## **APPENDIX B INFORMATION DETAILS FOR ORGANISATIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE RESEARCH**

### **Introduction**

My name is Christine Robinson I am a PhD research student at the School of Applied Social Science at the University of Stirling. The aim of this PhD study is to examine how organisations work together to provide housing services for military veterans in Scotland. This research will provide an insight into inter-professional working between the public and third sector (charities) who deliver housing policy and practice for military veterans.

### **What is involved?**

The case study is likely to involve document analysis for example examining your organisations policy and procedure documents, annual reports or any such documents that will give an indication of the ethos and culture of your organisation. Some of these documents generally can be found on an organisations website. Direct and participate observation which means observing what is happening in an organisation for example shadowing workers that provide advice or guidance to service users or perhaps attending meetings. Interviewing some key workers with a questionnaire survey to gain their views (the interview should take about one hour). Negotiation will determine which methods are acceptable to your organisation.

### **Confidentiality**

Personal details will be kept confidential at all times during the study. All names will be replaced with an anonymous identify for example respondent 1 said “.....”. Information will be stored using data protection guidelines and computer access can only be gained by the researchers password coded computer. However because this a small field of organisations it is likely that even if the organisations are not named they will be easily identified as could individuals. If the organisation agrees they will be named (this can be negotiated prior to the commencement of the research) or they will be referred to as an organisation from the public/private or third sector as this is important for the context of the research project. Quotations from the data collected may be used however quotes from an individual made anonymous may still be easily identified. The research is committed to causing no harm to organisations or participants and if it was felt that it could cause harm, participants will be asked if the information can be included in the research.

What happens to the information gathered?

All information collected will be kept confidential and only used for research purposes. The information obtained from the research will be used in a PhD thesis for the School of Applied Social Science, at the University of Stirling as part of a three year research project. The thesis will be available in the University library. The findings may be distributed to interested parties such as service providers and government departments. It may also be included in articles for publication in academic journals or presented at conferences.

How do I take part?

I will contact you soon to make an appointment and the consent form can be signed then.

What if there is a problem or a complaint.

If there is a problem or complaint please contact myself Christine Robinson on (01786 466310 or [clr3@stir.ac.uk](mailto:clr3@stir.ac.uk)) or alternatively contact my supervisors:

Professor Isobel Anderson on (01786 467718 [Isobel.anderson@stir.ac.uk](mailto:Isobel.anderson@stir.ac.uk)) or

Professor Kirstein Rummery on (01786 467693 [Kirstein.rummery@stir.ac.uk](mailto:Kirstein.rummery@stir.ac.uk)).

Many thanks

Christine Robinson



## **APPENDIX C - CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS AND ORGANISATIONS**

The purpose of this consent form is to make sure that you understand the nature of the study, your role within it and agree to take part. This is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time during the study. After reading, the information sheet and asking any questions that you may have you should sign this consent form.

Interviews will be recorded on a digital recorder in order to accurately record what you say. The recording will be used to make a written version of what was said and stored on a password-protected computer and any printed version in a locked filing cabinet so that no one else has access to them. Any names of people or organisation you mention will be removed at this stage so that any quotes used in the final research report cannot be traced back to you. Additionally, your own name will not be mentioned anywhere in the research report. If an anonymous quote could be linked back to an individual the researcher will seek permission from the participant to use the quote.

You may wish to provide the researcher with your contact details, any information given will be stored on a password-protected computer or in a locked filing cabinet so that no one else can access them. All contact details will be destroyed at the end of the research if you do not wish to be contacted again about any future research.

I have read and understood the information sheet

☐

I agree for interview to be recorded

☐

I agree to take part in the research and for quotes from the interviews to be used in a research report

☐

Name.....

Organisation .....

Date.....

Signature.....

## **APPENDIX D - VETERANS HOUSING SURVEY**

### Information and consent form

#### Introduction

I am a PhD research student at the School of Applied Social Science at the University of Stirling. I have worked in the housing profession. I am also part of the wider veterans' community and I have worked for the MOD in Germany.

#### Aim of the research

The aim of this research is to explore to what extent organisations (for example the MOD, the public sector and military charities) work together to provide housing services for veterans, in Scotland. The survey seeks your personal perspective on how you accessed housing services and how housing organisations have (or have not) worked together to meet your housing need. It is hoped that this research will provide a greater understanding of the housing needs of veterans and possibly benefit veterans in the future.

#### Am I eligible to take part?

You are eligible to take part in this research if you have left the armed forces in the last 10 years.

#### Data protection statement

This is an anonymous survey however you may wish to provide the researcher with your contact details, any information given will be stored on a password-protected computer or in a locked filing cabinet so that no one else can access them. All contact details will be destroyed at the end of the research.

#### Consent and how the information will be used

By taking part in this on-line survey you are agreeing for the data to be collected and used in a PhD thesis for the School of Applied Social Science, at the University of Stirling as part of a three year research project. The findings may be distributed to interested parties such as service providers and government departments. It may also be included in articles for publication in academic journals or presented at conferences.

Note that once you have clicked on the CONTINUE button at the bottom of each page you cannot return to review or amend the page.

Thank you for taking part in this research.

1. I have read this page and understand how the data will be used and protected. I consent to take part in this research

Yes

Veterans housing survey

2. Background information

Male

Female

Transgender

Prefer not to answer

3. Background information

18-24    25-31    32-38    39-45    46-52    53-59    60-65

a. What age are you?

4. How long ago did you leave the armed forces?

0 - 3 years

4 - 6

7 - 10

5. Please enter the date you left the armed forces.

(DD-MM-YYYY)

6. How long were you in the armed forces?

Less than a year

1-5 years

6-10 years

11-15 years

16-20 years

21-25 years

+26 years

7. What service were you in?

Royal Navy

Royal Marines

Army

Royal Air Force

Merchant Navy

Before leaving the armed forces

8. Before you left the armed forces were you given any housing advice?

Yes

No (If no then please proceed to question 12).

I did not need advice

I did not get time off to attend the advice session

Other (please specify):

9. Who provided the housing advice? (Optional)

(Select all that apply)

MOD resettlement services

Local authority housing service

Housing association

Military charity

Mortgage provider or estate agent

Private rented sector

Other (please specify):

10. How would you rate the quality of the advice and information you received? (Optional)

Excellent

Good

Neutral

Poor

Very poor

Would you like to provide further comment on the quality of the advice and information received? (Optional)

11. Did the MOD resettlement service contact any organisation to meet your housing need? (Optional)

Yes

No

Did they give you contact details of housing providers in the area that you wanted to settle in? (Optional)

Yes No

After leaving the armed forces

12. After leaving the armed forces did you have any contact with any of the following organisations for housing or housing advice? If you did not use any of the following services please go to questions 18.

Did you find the service to be    Comment?

Excellent    Good    Neutral    Poor    Very poor

a. MOD resettlement services

b. Local authority housing service

c. Housing Association\*

d. Military charity

e. Private rented sector



f. Other housing provider (please state)

g. An organisation that provides housing advice\*\*

13. Did any of the above organisations work together to meet your housing needs? For example did an advice service work with a local authority or housing association? (Optional)

Yes

No (If no then please proceed to question 17).

14. Which organisations worked together to meet your housing need?  
(Optional)

15. In your opinion how well did the organisations work together? (Optional)

16. Is there anything you wish to add about your experiences of organisations working together to meet your housing need. (Optional)

17. Thinking back over your experiences of using housing services how could they have been improved? (Optional)

(Select all that apply)

More coordinated working together between the agencies involved.

The organisations need to have a better understanding of the needs of veterans.

There was a lack of clear boundaries of responsibility between the different agencies involved.

Too many different agencies made it confusing and difficult to negotiate.

The work of the agencies involved in housing services overlapped.

There was a lack of organisations working together pre-discharge from the armed forces to resolve my housing needs.

There was a lack of professional housing advice available pre-discharge from the armed forces.

Other (please specify):

Your housing history

18. After leaving the armed forces have you experienced any of the following housing issues? (Optional)

(Select all that apply)

Have you ever experienced living on the streets any time after leaving the armed forces?

Have you being accommodated in temporary accommodation such as a hostel or B & B accommodation?

Have you been threatened with homelessness (for example being served a notice to quit by your landlord)?

Have you had to leave the family home because of a relationship breakdown?

Have you had to leave the family home because of a domestic dispute?

Have you been living in accommodation that is overcrowded?

Have you been living in a temporary structure such as a caravan?

Have you been sofa surfing depending on friends and family to provide temporary accommodation?

Other (please specify):

(Optional) (Select all that apply)

I have not experienced any of the above issues.

19. Have you ever considered yourself to be homeless? (Optional)

Yes

No

20. How are you currently accommodated? (Optional)

I am living in a property that I own outright

I am living in a property that I have a mortgage on

I am living in the private rented sector

I am living in council housing

I am living in a property allocated through a Registered Social Landlord for example the Glasgow Housing Association or any other local housing association

I am living in accommodation allocated through a military charity

I am living in tied accommodation related to my employment

I am living with my parents

I am living in temporary accommodation for example a hostel or B & B accommodation

I am living in a temporary structure such as a caravan

I am 'sofa surfing' depending on friends and family to provide temporary accommodation

I am living on the streets

Other (please specify):

Prize draw

21. Would you like to take place in a prize draw for £100 worth of high street vouchers?

Yes No a. If yes please leave email address. Your details will be stored using data protection guidance and destroyed after the research is complete.

b.

Further research

22. Would you be happy for me to use your e-mail address to contact you for further research?

Yes No

## Helpline information

This research is not intended to be controversial or to cause anxiety to anyone. However, if it raises issues that you find upsetting, or you have unresolved housing problem the following organisations may be able to help you:

Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA) Forces Help:  
[www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk) or 0800 731 4880.

Poppy Scotland: 0845 231 0300 or [www.poppyscotland.org.uk](http://www.poppyscotland.org.uk)

Veterans Scotland: 0131 550 1595 or [www.veteransscotland.co.uk](http://www.veteransscotland.co.uk)

## Housing Advice:

Shelter, [http://scotland.shelter.org.uk/get\\_advice](http://scotland.shelter.org.uk/get_advice), telephone 0808 800 4444

Scottish Veterans Residencies, <http://www.svronline.org/>, telephone 0131 556 0091

Through your local authority housing section contact details for all 32 local authorities in Scotland can be found at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/>

Publications/2010/03/24165717/1

## **APPENDIX E - INTERVIEW SCHEDULE/TOPIC GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS WITHIN ORGANISATIONS**

### **Opening the interview**

Welcome and introductions, thank the participant for taking part, quick explanation about information/consent forms, what the PhD is about and how long the interview is likely to take. Remind the participant that all information will remain anonymous and confidential and that they are free to stop interview at any point if they feel uncomfortable. State that there are no right and wrong answers and they are free to ask questions that need clarification. Thank them for participating.

### **1. Background Questions**

Can you tell me a little about the organisation and your role within it? What do you think are the core objectives of your organisation and are they being met?

**Prompts:** Aims and objectives and values of the organisation?

What are the key strengths of the organisation?

What are the key weaknesses of the organisation?

Is there any regulation and who provides the regulation?

What housing services do you provide for veterans?

2. Are you involved in devising policy and practice? And if so what are the challenges?

Prompts:

When employing these policies in practice do you have discretion and do you exercise it? Can you give me an example?

Do you have to apply the policies and procedures in certain ways to get the best outcome for your client group? Can you give me an example?

Do you feel you are able to offer an individual service to clients or do you have to offer a more generalised service?

To what extent do you think the service meets the needs of the client?

To what extent do you think the service does not meet the needs of the client?

Do you get feedback from service users? In what form? Have there been any changes made to your service because of service user feedback?

3. What is your experience of working with other agencies? Who are these agencies and why do you think you need to work with these agencies?

**Prompts:** Can you tell me if you have any formal partnership working protocols: Formal lines of responsibility or a shared vision?

Do you think there is equity of power between the organisations and individuals that you work with in? Or a commitment to working together and trust?

Do you have clear lines of responsibility or do you feel that there is ambiguity and un-certainty between the organisational roles? Do you feel that this could lead to contention between the agencies if there were failures or difficulties?

Do you feel that you have to compromise your ethos or beliefs to work with other agencies? Do the other agencies have similar or different goals or approaches?

4. In your opinion what are the key strengths and weaknesses of working with other agencies?



**Prompts:** Does working together provide better outcomes for service users?

Do you feel you are dependent on other organisations?

Do you think other organisations depend on you?

Do you negotiate with other organisations and exchange or share resources?

Is there any duplication in service provision?

What enables working together?

What are the barriers to working together?

Who are you not working with that you think you should?

5. Just to remind you this research is about how organisations work together to provide housing services for veterans. Is there anything you wish to add that may not have been covered, or are there any issues you want to discuss further?

Thank you for taking part in this research.

## APPENDIX F - CASE STUDY PROTOCOL

PhD research question: to what extent do organisations work together to provide housing services for military veterans, in Scotland.

### 1. Case study overview

#### 1.1 Core questions:

Question one “how do the case study organisations ‘fit’ a governance perspective?”

Question two “what is the nature of collaboration with other institutions at the case study organisations, in Scotland?”

Question three “how do the case study organisations operate in the area of policy/practice/services to house military veterans, in Scotland?”

#### 1.2. Theoretical framework:

The theoretical framework to guide and facilitate this research will be Stoker’s (1998:18) ‘governance as theory: five propositions’. The five propositions are as follows:

“Governance refers to a set of institutions and actors that are drawn from but also beyond government.

Governance identifies the blurring of boundaries and responsibilities for tackling social and economic issues.

Governance identifies the power dependence involved in the relationships between institutions involved in collective action.

Governance is about autonomous self-governing networks or actors.

Governance recognizes the capacity to get things done which does not rest on the power of government to command or use its authority. It sees government as able to use new tools and techniques to steer and guide”.

### 1.3. Objective of study:

The objective of this research is to examine the policy and practices within each organisation, how their governance arrangements synchronise with the ‘five propositions’, how they reach decisions based on the context that they operate within and how does this influence them working together. It will consider what the drivers and challenges are and how this impacts on them providing housing services for military veterans.

## 2. Data collection procedures

2.1. The research will include four individual case studies; a local authority, a registered social landlord, a military support organisations and a military charity that provides housing for veterans.

2.2. A review of the organisations web-site prior to the visit to access documents such as policy, practice, annual reviews or any other relevant articles.

2.3. Data collection to include interviews with key actors that are likely to include policy makers, practitioners, directors, councillors & project managers. After consent forms are signed a clear schedule will be negotiated and produced. Equipment required - laptop, digital recorder, batteries, water, pens & paper.

### 3. Outline of case study report

3.1. Policy and practice in operation.

3.2. Drivers that promote organisations working together.

3.3. Barriers to organisations working together (autonomy, blurring of boundaries, power dependencies).

3.4. What control mechanisms do government use to governing the different sectors.

3.5. Documentary analysis of each organisation.

### 4. Case study questions

4.1. Is what they state in their policies what they do in practice? Do they adopt SLB to meet their clients' needs? How do they feel about working with other organisations does it meet their aims or do they have to abandon their own ethos? Can what they do in practice be corroborated and augmented by documentary evidence. What is the nature, if any of collaborative action?

Place documentary analysis in a logical model framework; collect data from interviews about policy & practice examine if there is a relationship between them both. Do they adhere to the following principles whilst working in collaboration?

Principle	Title	Characteristics
1	Acknowledgement of the need for partnership	Prerequisite - partners appreciation of their interdependence.
2	Clarity & realism of purpose	Once values & principles are agreed aims & objectives can be defined. Aims & objectives that are not realistic = diminishing of commitment.
3	Commitment & ownership	1 & 2 need to be supported & reinforced particularly by senior management.
4	Development & maintenance of trust	Trust is needed for the most enduring & successful partnerships. Trust is hard won and easily lost.
5	Establishment of clear & robust partnership arrangements	Should be focused on processes & outcomes rather than structure & inputs. How are each partner accountable
6	Monitoring, review & organisational learning	Helps cement trust. May provide evidence of commitment & costs & benefits to partners.
Hudson & Hardy:53-62 (2002) Partnerships, new labour & the governance of welfare		

